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THE

CHRISTIAN'S
MANUAL:

BEING A

TRANSLATION

FROM THE

Enchiridion Militis Christiani

OF

ERASMUS Desiderius

2 ESDRAS vii. 57, 58.

Then answered he me, and said, This is the condition of the *Battle*, which man that is born upon the earth shall fight;

That if he be overcome, he shall suffer as thou hast said; but if he get the victory, he shall receive the thing that I say.

L O N D O N:

Printed by J. Oliver; and Sold by R. WARE, on Ludgate-Hill; S. BIRT, in Ave-Mary Lane; W. FREDERICK, at Bath; and BENJ. HICKEY, at Bristol.

M.DCC.LII.

CHRISTIAN
MANUM

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TRAVERS



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There are many things that I have learned from you, and I am sure that you will be able to help me in many ways. I am sure that you will be able to help me in many ways. I am sure that you will be able to help me in many ways.



T H E
P R E F A C E.



THE following is a Translation of the Enchiridion of Erasmus, a work originally designed by him for the direction, and at the request of a particular friend, who had purposed to withdraw from the Court and secular affairs, that he might apply himself wholly to the practise of the Christian Religion, and the great work of his Salvation. The event however was not answerable to the merit and design of our Author, nor to the sudden resolution of his friend; on the contrary, (such

are the allurements of a Court) the latter plunged deeper into worldly business, (for inconstancy is the genuine fruit of immature purposes) and by that fatal step, as he himself acknowledged, bid adieu to happiness. However, though this one end was disappointed, yet many good ones were answered thereby; for though this Book was written by the Author in the midst of that great work his Paraphrase on the New Testament, in a very few days, yet it had the good fortune to be approved of by the most pious and eminent men then living, and accordingly ran thro' many Editions soon after its first publication. Indeed the vein of good sense, with which this little Treatise abounds, the true spirit of piety, and the elegance of style is such, as all who have a taste in any of these respects, cannot but relish and admire.

IT opens likewise the nature of many particular virtues and vices, which the Scriptures command or forbid only in general; as their design was not to treat of moral duties systematically, but only as they were occasioned by incidental facts and circumstances. By this means it often happens, that tho' men know the
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general Rule well enough, yet they are liable to misapply it in particular instances of behaviour, and ignorantly take virtue for vice, and vice for virtue. In these doubtful kinds of action, our Author has shewed mankind, how much they impose upon themselves and others; and lets them see, that many times they are gratifying their selfish passions, when they considered themselves as rigidly virtuous.

THE dangers with which the Christian Soldier is on all hands encompassed, whether by the world, the flesh, or the devil; and that Panoply, or whole Armour of God, by which he is to defend himself, and fight the good fight of Faith, are here painted in the strongest and most lively colours; so that we may look upon this Manual as a small portable kind of weapon, ready upon all occasions, to withstand any sudden attack of our spiritual enemy.

THE motives to virtue, and discouragements from vice, whether they be worldly respects, as Fortune, Health, and Character; or purely spiritual, as the example and love of Christ, future rewards and punishments; all these are sometimes so concisely touched, at
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other times so copiously and pathetically enlarged upon, that whosoever is thoroughly persuaded of the truth and reality of them, I should wonder if he could ever resist their force, or continue long in sin without remorse, if not amendment.

T H E usefulness of this work appears more fully, in that it is calculated to promote solid piety, and universal benevolence. For its design is not to undermine one Christian Church, and to build up another on its ruins, more to our own fancies : not to correct seeming errors in our Liturgy, but real faults in our lives ; not to be bitter against this or that sect of men, but to be kindly affectioned to all ; not to make Christianity subservient to secular interests, but to apply even these to the purposes of religion ; in short, to be not outwardly in our actions, but inwardly in our sentiments, as unlike as possible to the generality of Christians ; who are as much the world in the Scripture sense, as Heathens ever were ; and probably would be Heathens, — be any thing, so they might gain but a small share of this world's good, though in exchange for the happiness of their immortal souls.

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OUR Author, in his fifth Rule, dwells very long upon the vices and superstitions of the Monks his cotemporaries, and launches out far in an extempore invective against them, because they were wont to substitute mere outward shew and hypocritical appearances, in the place of solid virtue and inward goodness. And it is no wonder that a man of so deep a penetration as Erasmus was, should see and expose the absurdity of their false pretences to religion; and that he pulled off the mask from those grave dotards, who could set off the worst dispositions, and most uncharitable actions, with the gloss and varnish of extraordinary sanctity and devotion. And though it cannot I think be denied that he himself (such was his preference of peace and charity to all other considerations) remained in the Communion, though not in the corruptions of the Church of Rome; yet it is highly probable that his works, whether serious or otherwise, set the grand props and bulwarks of Popery, the Monks and other religious Orders, in so bad a light, as necessarily paved the way to a Reformation.

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THE uses that may be made of this part of the Enchiridion, to wit, his invective against the Monks of those days, by the members of the reformed Church, are many and various. And the most obvious is this, that we may learn from thence to entertain a just sense of our happiness in being incorporated into that Church, which has long since renounced the superstitious rites, that he condemns, and set us free from the tyranny of Popery. For the fasts that she enjoins, and the days that she ballows, they cannot administer any other occasion than that of devotion and piety, since she prescribes them only as means, the one of subduing our lusts, and the other of spiritualizing our affections by solemn prayer. Even the sign of the Cross in Baptism, against which such groundless offence has been sometime taken, was never intended by her as a charm; but is a mere token or memorial, putting us in mind that we who have been sealed the servants of God in our foreheads, should not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified.

ANOTHER use that may be made by Protestants of the Rule we are now speaking of,

of, is to observe with our Author there at large, that all our deeds without Charity are nothing worth, and that the very end of the commandment is Charity. Duly considering this, may I not ask without offence, what are we then to think in general of those unchristian divisions and dissensions, that reign among the present professors of Christianity? Christ himself has declared, that a kingdom divided against itself shall not stand; but if without a compliance in indifferent matters, there can be no such thing as society of any kind; how much less can there be expected that strict union that ought to subsist among the followers of the same holy Religion, without the like compliance? and to these schisms in the Church, we may ascribe as to the true cause, the present quick growth of Infidelity, as the divisions among Christians heretofore, were the parents of Mahometism and Apostacy. It is not my desire to enlarge upon the guilt of such scandals among us, or to inculcate the woe denounced by Christ against offences.

BUT though no such bad consequences were to be feared on this account, yet since a fond contentious humour ever leads men into a
a breach

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breach of communion, with its usual attendants, Hatred and Envy; if for this reason only, it ought to be suppressed as unchristian and uncharitable. And in fact, do we not see the temper of one Sect of Christians to be visibly soured, and as much set against their brethren of the Reformation, as against that very Church from which they both reformed; though the former are allowed to require of them no sinful terms of Communion. Whether this division be religious or political, upon good or bad grounds, it is nevertheless in its consequences carnal. And I leave it to the serious consideration of Christians, whether they do not think, that the most acceptable sacrifice they can make to God is, that of their religious scruples and irreligious animosities to the weightier matters of the Gospel, Peace and Charity.

THE last use I intend to make of the Rule under consideration, is to observe, that though that kind of superstition, which our Author there treats of, be indeed thoroughly purged out of the reformed Church; yet that even amongst Protestants themselves there are still some footsteps of superstition apparent, which
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cannot it seems be entirely rooted out of man's nature. And here I would address two sorts of men, if it were possible to speak to them without offence on this head, and admonish them as they are Methodists and Quakers.

WITH regard to the first, be it for once remembered, that the Founder of this Sect, not long since paved the way to his new institution by seeming extraordinary acts of devotion; such as rising to sing Psalms in the night, whilst others slept; kneeling in Church, at a time perhaps when others stood; fasting, whilst they eat; and praying, whilst they were joined in company. Such practises as these, I say, laid the first foundation of Methodism: which if followed without ostentation and hypocrisy, without self-applause and supercilious censuring of others, without resting in them as the perfection of piety, and putting them in the place of real worth and goodness, may become, it is true, excellent means of keeping our bodies in subjection. But if he that eateth not, condemneth him that eateth, and bodily exercises such as these, are made the very soul and substance of Religion; they then draw men aside like a false bias

bias from the main scope of the Christian Faith, form still more and more uncharitable divisions amongst us, and substitute the tithes of Anise and Cummin, in the place of the weightier matters of the Law, Judgement and Mercy.

IN the last place, the Quakers, as they are called, fall under our observation; whose inconsistency with themselves in one or two particulars is very remarkable. For since Christianity consists not in the outward habiliments of the body, but in the inward frame of the mind; does it not seem strange, that a number of men professing so spiritual a Religion, and moreover laying extraordinary claims to the assistance of the holy Spirit, should nevertheless distinguish themselves by a superstitious uniform in dress, and a language peculiar to themselves; as if the kingdom of heaven were to be obtained by the precise manner in which we express our minds, or cloath our bodies; and not by righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy Ghost. What difference is there, if this be the case, between the Jew and the Christian; and how is it material whether we make a distinction betwixt meats and drinks with

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with the one, or words and cloaths with the other? Simplicity of habit, so far as it indicates a correspondent simplicity in the mind, is very commendable; but true Religion cannot consist in that which may be counterfeited; and though she is ever serious and earnest, it is surely in matters worth her attention.

THE truth is, Christianity is so spiritual a Religion, and men so gross in their conceptions, that they who revere the name, but care not to come up to the thing signified, are willing to take refuge in outward shew and religious mimicry, to supply the place of that inward sanctity which God requires; and by this means become Christians in name, semblance, garb, every thing—but in deed and in truth.

FROM these, and the like misapprehensions, from commonly received opinions, and vulgar errors in religion, our Author calls us back, giving us right notions of things, and inflaming our hearts with virtuous sentiments. And I will venture to say, that whoever does not find himself much wiser and better upon the perusal of this Manual, may justly ascribe it, if not to the badness of the Translation, to the badness of his own heart.



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CHAP. I.

Of the duty of Watching.



IN the first place, It ought always to be remembered, that life is one continual state of war, as *Job* observes, that veteran of invincible courage and experience; and that the *generality* are too easily imposed upon by the pleasing delusions of this enchanting *world*, untimely rejoicing before the battle is won: and as if all was peace, they lull themselves

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into the sweetest dream of security, calm and unmoved, though attacked daily by the numberless powers of vice, beset with the various stratagems, and constant ambushes of the enemy. To make you then sensible of your extreme danger, imagine yourself observed from above by an innumerable host of malicious demons, watching a fair opportunity of playing their whole artillery against you, and transfixing your soul with their poisoned deadly arrows, which wound most infallibly, if they be not repulsed by the impenetrable shield of *faith*. The *world* too, which, according to *St John*, lieth in wickedness, *hems* us in on all sides, its vices being as opposite to Christ, as Christ therefore is to it. Several ways it has of offending, sometimes by open force, assailing us with adversity, sometimes tempting us to capitulate, by false promises of immense rewards, at other times it circumvents and steals upon us unawares, seizing and devouring its weak and thoughtless prey. Beneath the wily serpent, the first destroyer of our peace, gliding sometimes over the pleasant verdure,

ture, sometimes lurking in his cave amidst his circling spires, never ceases to watch the steps, and to bruise the heel of the woman. Now by the woman is to be understood carnality; that being our *Eve*, by whose enticements the subtle beast allures us to fatal enjoyments. Then, as if we had not enemies sufficient all around us, we carry one more intimate even in our bosoms, and wear him in our very hearts: nothing can be nearer, and therefore nothing more dangerous. This is the old *Adam*, the earthly part in us, that is keener than an enemy, and more familiar than a friend; whom as you can never expel, so you never can be safely guarded against. You cannot keep too many spies upon him, to prevent his opening the gates, and surrendering God's temple into the hands of the adversary.

SEEING then we are engaged in so dreadful a conflict, and must cope with enemies so numerous, so treacherous, so expert, and withal so bent upon our destruction; can we be so heedless as not to take arms, not to stand upon our guard,

and examine all that passes? But as if there was no danger near, shall we revel, and sport, and play, and swim in endless pleasures? So effeminate are our manners, as if life, instead of a warfare, was designed to be a debauch. Thus we are crowned with chaplets and roses, when instead thereof we should be harnessed for the battle; are sunk in ease and luxury, when we ought to be going through our exercise; and are striking the soft lute with our fingers, that arms would better become: as if that deserved the name of peace, which is the most formidable kind of war. For whosoever is in amity with vice, wages war with that God, whom he had entered into covenant with at his Baptism. And who but a madman can say, it is peace, when he has God to his enemy, who is the only author and giver of peace? who himself hath pronounced by the mouth of his prophet, *there is no peace to the wicked*. For indeed he hath vouchsafed the blessing of peace on no other terms than these, that we strive mightily with sin, and exert our utmost strength to subdue it, so long

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as we are in this mortal body. But on the other hand, if we love and cherish it, we shall make him doubly our enemy, whose friendship alone we need to value; both because we side with that which is as opposite to God, as light and darkness; and ungratefully break the promise we before made to him, though bound to perform it by the most solemn rites. Knoweth not the Christian soldier, that, when he was baptized, he listed under Christ's banner, to whose goodness he stands indebted both for life and salvation? Can he forget, that he hath expressly sworn to obey the will of his great leader, that he hath also taken the sacraments as a kind of earnest, and devoted himself to hell and destruction, if he proves false to his engagements? Why was you signed with the sign of the cross, but to shew that you purposed to fight manfully under Christ's banner? What a shame is it for one man to desert from his prince, though *another* man? What heart then can contemn Jesus Christ, whom considered as God he

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must needs fear ; as made man for his sake, he ought to love ?

THE very name of *Christian* puts you in mind of your duty to Christ. What then can induce you to revolt basely to the enemy, from whom he hath *already* redeemed you with his blood ? Why would you take the devil's pay, to serve him over again in his rebellious army ? How dare you bear arms against that King, who even laid down his life for you ? For as he said himself, he that is not with him, is against him, and he that gathereth not with him, scattereth, *Luke ii.* And do but attend to the reward of your rebellion. If you would know, you who conform to this world, what that is, hear what *St Paul* says, a chief in the Christian army, *the wages of sin is death.* Even in the most justifiable war, a man would be loath to endanger only his body ; how much less would he hazard his soul in one the most unjustifiable ? In wars, such as men wage with men, whether prompted by brutal rage or necessary defence, have you not observed, how the spirits of the soldiers have been elevated,

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elevated, by the hopes of plunder, the terror of the enemies cruelty, the desire of applause, or the shame of cowardice: fired with these incentives, what toil have they not endured, what danger run, and with what eagerness engaged? and all this for how mean and paltry a reward? perhaps an encomium from their General, a man like themselves; a bad poem on the occasion; a laurel crown not worth a farthing, or a farthing more in their pockets.

BUT shame or hope has little or no effect upon Christians, though God himself is their spectator and rewarder both. And what are the rewards that he hath set before us? not gold and silver, or such like trifles, but that which *eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive* — certain foretastes of that happiness he hath vouchsafed for our comfort in this life; and in the end, — life everlasting. In sports where men contend for mere honour, though that be the victor's prize only, yet even the vanquished share certain rewards; but this strife is at our utmost peril, and here our

life is at stake, not our honour. And as the highest reward is to be obtained by the conqueror, so the severest punishments will be inflicted upon them that lose the battle. Heaven is promised to them that take it by *force*, and how must every generous mind be fired with so ravishing a hope? especially when they consider, that he who made the promise, can neither deceive, nor be deceived. Again, when we reflect, that all our actions are known unto God, and that the whole company of heaven are spectators of this glorious conflict, will not even shame prevail upon us to fight manfully? considering that he will applaud us, whose praise is our greatest happiness. Why then should we not seek it, even tho' we purchased it at the hazard of our lives. Moreover, it argues a great meanness of spirit not to be moved by rewards, but the very basest of men are wrought upon by fear of punishment. Now an enemy, tho' never so implacable, can only take away your life and property; this was the most that the fierce *Achilles* could do to *Hector*. But in the other case, your immortal soul

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is in danger. And though your body will not be dragged round your grave, as *Hector's* was thrice round *Troy* town, yet your soul and body too will be sunk into the lowest pit. The worst a conqueror can do is to dissolve the union of soul and body; but the soul hereafter may be for ever deprived of the sight of God, which is its very life. Nature has ordained that the body shall die, though it were not by a violent death, but the soul cannot die without being infinitely miserable. With what caution do we provide, that the body may come to no harm, or if it does, with what care and pains do we cure it; and shall we then neglect to heal the inward anguish of the soul? the *death* of the body how alarming, because it is visible with our eyes: but the death of the soul is invisible, and therefore few believe it, scarce any are shocked at it; though the loss of the one exceeds that of the other, as much as the soul is superior to the body, or as God is above the soul of man.

Now there are certain symptoms, by which it may be plainly seen, what condition

tion the soul is in, and how far it is alive or dead. When the stomach does not digest well, but even loaths its food, we know for certain that the body is out of order. Now the word of GOD is the meat and drink of the soul, which if it disrelishes and abhors, it is a plain proof, that the palate of the mind is vitiated and disordered. Nay, if it does not receive and digest its food kindly, it cannot be a doubt any longer, but that the soul is out of order, and its constitution at best but crazy. When we see a man creeping along as if his legs were not able to support him, and dragging his body after him, like a load too heavy for him to bear, we know that he is very weak and feeble: — just so we should conclude *his* soul to be, who is cold and indifferent to all the duties of religion, who takes fire at the least affront that is offered, and is quite dejected at the loss of a paltry bit of money. Again, when a man has lost the use of his senses, so that he can neither see nor hear, and his whole body is cold and stiff, we take it for granted that he is expired, And is not the case

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the same with the soul, is not that too defunct, when a man's heart is frozen, the eyes of his understanding so darkened, that he cannot discern the light of the clearest truth; the ear of reason deaf to the inward call of GOD's word, and in short, the whole man become stupid and senseless? Thus a Christian can see his brother in distress, without the least emotion, for that he is safe himself. And why is he not moved? because the man is dead—dead and forsaken of GOD; for where GOD is, there abides love, since GOD is love. Were it otherwise, were he a living member of Christ's body, how could any *other* member suffer, and he not suffer with it, nay not so much as be sensible of it?—To proceed to other symptoms of the same kind, you have cheated your friend, or perhaps defiled his bed, yet the soul, though it has received a mortal wound, is so far from smarting, that you can even rejoice in your sin, as if some good thing had happened unto you; but know however that your soul is perished and undone. The body that cannot feel the pricking of a needle, and the
soul

foul that is not sensible of so deep a gash, are both alike motionless and dead.—You will sometimes hear a man uttering profane, arrogant, malicious, and unchaste expressions, and raving against his neighbour like a madman; in this case you must allow, that such a one's soul is departed,—his bosom is the sepulchre where it continueth as it were to rot, from whence issue those steams that poison each by-stander. Thus Christ called the Pharisees *whited sepulchres*, because their souls within them were dead, and fit only to be interred. And the royal prophet to the same purpose says, *Their throat is an open sepulchre, with their lips have they deceived.* The bodies of holy men are the temples of God's spirit, those of the wicked are the graves of the dead, agreeably to the meaning of the *Greek* word for body *, which signifies a grave. And indeed, the mouth and throat of such, is but the yawning of that sepulchre, which is lodged in their bosoms. For if the body be dead, when separated from the soul, much more so is the soul when separated from

* σῶμα quasi σῆμα.

from GOD. Nay, a carcase that has been dead four days is not more offensive to our smell, than the savour of that soul is to GOD and his holy angels, that has been as long dead in trespasses and sins. When therefore a man's heart belches out noisom, foul, and pestilent speeches, it betrays a soul within lying in a state of putrefaction. For the scripture saith, *from the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh*; if then his soul was quickened by GOD's presence, he would utter things worthy of GOD. But on the contrary, when the disciples in the gospel say unto Christ, *Lord, to whom shall we go, thou hast the words of eternal life?* It is plain, that the words of life could flow from no other source, than a soul continually inspired by the presence of the deity, which alone can raise us up to life everlasting.

THERE is this further difference betwixt the soul and body, that an indisposition in the latter will admit of some relief. Nay, when it has actually been dead, it has been raised again to life. But it must be an extraordinary grace of GOD that restores

stores a soul once dead in sin, and it must needs recover a sound state, before it finally takes its leave of the body. Again, the death of the body is attended often with little or no sense, and at most its sufferings are soon over; but the soul must suffer to all eternity. And though it may be dead in a moral or metaphorical sense, yet in fact it will live hereafter to endure a perpetual kind of death.

SEEING therefore our danger is so great, so marvellous indeed, what stupidity is it, not to provide against so intolerable an evil? yet we have no reason to despair, be our danger never so great, our enemy never so strong. For if on the one hand we have a formidable adversary, on the other we have a most powerful succour and defence. Many there be that fight against us, but GOD is greater than them all. And if he be for us, who can be against us? If he is our support, who can make us fall? But then we must be thoroughly resolved in our own minds, to be conquerors. And for our encouragement, let us consider, that we have not to do with a
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victorious, but a conquered enemy; one that has already been overcome by Christ our head, and whom if we follow, we may likewise overcome.

BUT our first care must be, to fight under his banner, and then by his conduct nothing can withstand us. We are weak enough of ourselves, but in him we are strong. Besides the fortune of the war does not depend upon blind chance, for then our condition would be wretched indeed, but the success of it depends on GOD, and by him is in our hands. No one ever lost this battle, but by his own choice. Every man may have assistance that will, and he that makes use of it, must conquer. And he will not only lend you his assistance, but even let you make a merit of it. The victory it is true must be ascribed to him, who alone being free from sin, destroyed the dominion of it; but then, you are not to expect it without your own endeavour likewise. For he who said, *be of good comfort, I have overcome the world,* John xvi. said it with a design to encourage you, and not to make you slothful. To conquer through

through Christ therefore, is to follow his example. To conclude, we must steer our course in such a manner between the two extremes, as not to depend upon the grace of God, presuming to be careless ourselves, neither to abandon ourselves to despair, from a view of the difficulties to be overcome.



CH A P. II.

Of the Christian Armour.

ONE principal duty of a Christian in this spiritual warfare is, to be perfectly well acquainted with the number and strength of the enemy, and with what weapons he may be most advantageously attacked and subdued. He is likewise to keep them in readiness upon occasion, lest he be surprized in a naked and defenceless state, whilst the adversary lieth in wait to devour. In a campaign, the soldier is not always fighting, but has frequent opportunities

tunities of rest, either when a truce is made, or the enemy hath taken up their winter quarters. But Christians are obliged to watch and fight continually, during their residence in this mortal body. Their motions must be directed by those of the foe, who, as he never ceases to ensnare, so neither must we to stand upon our guard. Even when he appears least dangerous, by seeming to fly, or to be at peace with us, he is then laying traps in our way:— nay, he is much less formidable when he is at open war with us, and much more suspicious, when he puts on a smooth and calm behaviour. Let it be our first and chiefest care therefore, to arm well our souls. We use to defend our bodies against the point of a villain, and shall we then neglect the security of our souls? shall we be less studious to prevent our ruin, than the fiend is to compass it? less watchful to save, than he to destroy?

BUT the Christian Armour shall be more particularly considered in its proper place. Only in general it is worth notice, that there are two principal ways and

means to extirpate the whole family of vice, (for as the *Jews* subdued the seven nations, so must the Christian the seven capital sins) and these are prayer and knowledge. Thus *St Paul*, by bidding us *pray without ceasing*, admonishes us to be always upon our guard. For devout prayer lifts up the soul to heaven, a tower never to be scaled by the enemy. And knowledge fortifies the understanding with wholesome doctrines, so that the one ought never to be without the other: *Alterius sic altera poscit opem res, & conjurat amicè*. That interceeds, but this teaches *what* you are to intercede for.—Faith and hope enable a man to pray fervently, and as *St James* says, *nothing doubting*; but knowledge only can instruct him to pray for what is good, and approved by Christ. Even the sons of *Zebedee* heard this reproof at his mouth, *Ye know not what ye ask*. Prayer is indeed the better act, as holding intercourse with God, nevertheless knowledge is full as necessary. The *Jews* being delivered out of *Egypt*, could never have travelled safely during so long a journey, if they had not been conducted

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(as every one must) by the hands of *Moses* and *Aaron*. For by *Aaron*, who was the chief priest, is typified prayer: by *Moses*, you are to understand the knowledge of the law; both equally necessary guides through the maze of life.

BUT knowledge will not avail, that is defective; nor prayer, that is not *servent*. When the *Israelites* fought, *Moses* prayed for their success, which was effectual so long as his hands were lifted up; but when he let them fall, they were presently beaten. Perhaps you are one of those, that lay a stress upon the *number* of Psalms you mutter over, and think that the spirit of prayer consists in multiplying words; which is the error of those that stick to the letter, and are so childish as to overlook the spiritual meaning. But we have not so learned Christ, who says in *St. Matthew*, *When ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.* And *St. Paul* prefers five words with his understanding, to ten thou-

said in an unknown tongue. *Moses*, though he did not utter a syllable, yet the Lord said unto him, *Why criest thou unto me?* which shews, that it is the earnest desire of the soul, and not the request of the lips, to which he pays a greater regard, than to the loudest complaints the voice can utter.— When therefore the enemy solicits you, and you are in danger of relapsing into your former sins, accustom yourself to lift both heart and hands unto heaven, with full assurance of help in the time of need. To be employed in the duties of devotion, is the surest means to take your mind off from earthly pursuits, and to fix its attention on Christ.

BUT lest you should despise the assistance of knowledge, and depend wholly upon prayer, I would offer the following considerations. We read that *Israel* was contented to avoid the *Amalekite*, and durst not openly attack, and come to a close engagement with him, till they had been fed with Manna from heaven, and drank of the water that miraculously flowed out of the rock. In like manner *David*, when he had tasted
of

of the same repast, defied all his enemies round about him, saying, *Tbou shalt prepare a table before me, against them that trouble me.* Psalm xxiii. And indeed, there can be no temptation so strong, or foe so desperate, nor any misfortune so grievous and intolerable, but its edge may be blunted, and its strength subdued, by intense application, and study of the holy Scriptures. That is the *Manna* of which I spake before, and which has been used by very good authors, to signify the *Law* in its mystical sense. For as *that* was not of terrestrial growth, but came down like rain from heaven, it plainly denotes the difference betwixt divine and human learning; for the holy Scripture is of divine inspiration, and acknowledges none but God for its author. *That* also is described to be a *small* round thing, in which it resembles the stile and language of scripture, which though plain and mean, contains in it mysteries of the highest importance. As *that* was white, so is the Christian institution pure and undefiled, and not like human inventions, which are ever spotted with
foul

foul and gross errors. Lastly, as the *Hebrews* wondered, saying, *What is this?* or, it is *Manna*; so the scripture is every where admirable, and worthy of our most diligent search and examination.

AGAIN, it is a usual thing with the holy Spirit under the idea of *water*, to couch the knowledge of the divine law. Thus *Ezekiel* speaks of the holy waters that could not be passed, *chap.* xlvii. and you read *Gen.* xvi. of the wells dug by *Abraham*, which were filled up by the *Philistines*, and opened again by *Isaac*, *Exod.* xv. and of the twelve wells of water, where the *Israelites* encamped, and refreshed themselves after their many peregrinations. In the gospel we hear of the well, where *Jesus* sat to rest himself. Of the waters of *Siloam*, where the blind was ordered to go, and in washing received his sight. Of the water which *Jesus* poured into a bason to wash his disciples feet. And to mention no more, the names of wells, fountains, and rivers, perpetually occur in our reading, by which we are taught to imbibe, and inwardly digest the holy Scriptures.

tures. For the water running through the channels of the earth, what is it but the mystical sense of Scripture? When it boils up in fountains, it is the same mystery explained. When it expands and diffuses itself every where, for the edification of the brethren, it may justly be compared to a river, whose fruitfulness and overflowing it so much resembles. Be therefore but thoroughly acquainted with the holy Scriptures, and meditate on the law of the Lord day and night, and you will not be afraid of any terror, but be proof against the assaults, and manifold attempts of the enemy.

BUT in reading the holy Scriptures, there is this due caution to be observed, namely, that you do not take them in hand without the greatest simplicity and purity of intention, lest the remedy should, by your own fault, become worse than the disease; and that heavenly *Manna* should corrupt and stink, which it behoved you to digest, and receive into your heart; and thus, like *Uzzab*, 1 Chron. xiii. who put forth his unhallowed hands to hold the tottering ark, your officious zeal, being not first

first duly prepared, may be punished likewise with sudden death. Now the first qualification for this purpose is, highly to esteem the holy Scriptures, believing them to be the oracles of God. And after that, you will find yourself wonderfully transported, rapt, and inspired, if you approach them with the awe and reverence that is due to them: for *they* are the delights of the happy lover, *they* the riches of the great Solomon, *they* the hidden treasures of infinite wisdom. But be not abrupt and unmannerly in your approaches to them; for the gate is low, and will not admit of a hasty, careless, entrance into it. Be assured first, that what you see and feel is nothing near so real, true, and substantial, as what you read therein. *Heaven and earth may pass away, but one jot, or one tittle, shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled, Matt. v.* Men may impose upon themselves or others, but *God is truth, and can neither deceive, nor be deceived.*

Now the Scripture hath a stile and language (which should diligently be considered) peculiar to itself. The divine Wisdom
stoops

stoops down to the level of our capacities, as a careful mother lisps to her children, before they can speak plainly. It renders milk to babes in Christ, reserving strong meat to the adult and full grown. As the Scripture then condescends to our weakness, so should we also aspire to its height. It would be prodigious to be always a child, and idle to make no proficiency. Now the careful meditating, and thorough understanding of one single verse only, will profit more, than the being able to repeat the whole book of Psalms, but without knowing the meaning of one word thereof. Certainly it is a very great error that some men fall into, who think it enough to read, or repeat such a portion of Scripture; the *literal* sense of which they scarce understand, and never trouble themselves to find out and apply the spiritual meaning, which is one great cause of the decay of Christian piety. Whereas Christ saith, *It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh* (or carnal sense) *profiteth nothing.* And St Paul speaks after his Master likewise, *the letter killeth, it is the spirit that quickeneth.*

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And again, *We know that the law is spiritual, not carnal.* And spiritual things must be compared with spiritual. Formerly they worshipped on such a mountain, but now the Father of spirits must be worshipped in spirit and in truth. We may indeed pity the weakness of those, who do the best they can, and for want of capacity arrive at no higher pitch, than firmly and faithfully to believe the matters contained in Scripture; yet this should be no bar to men of superior understandings to exert their talents, to quit the literal for the moral meaning, and to join their prayers and endeavours, until *he who hath the key of David open unto them the book sealed with the seven seals, who shutteth and no man openeth, who alone revealeth the secrets of the Father, which no one knoweth but the Son, and him to whom he is pleased to reveal them.*

OTHER books have likewise their use, if a man knows how to pick and chuse the best out of them, and like the Bee, can sip of every flower, sucking out the good and wholesome juices, but quitting the poison; and

and by that means may fortify his soul upon every occasion in life. Some of them are stored with proper arguments, and are also Christian, so far as they are true. Yet the only Armour of proof, that no sword can penetrate, is no where to be had, but in the magazine of Scripture; wherein all kinds of weapons are laid up, wherewith to combat the uncircumcised *Philistines*. These are arms unknown to the Heroes of antiquity, who though they subdued others, were subdued themselves by their own lusts. Human learning may be compared to the armour of gigantic *Saul*, which *David* tried and rejected, because it was too big for him, and rather a burthen than a defence. He therefore armed himself with five little stones and a sling, as being more commodious and portable; and with no other weapon, than this of Scripture mystically understood, he slew the great *Goliath*, our only enemy, Satan the parent of pride.

AND did not Christ our head vanquish the Tempter by the self-same means, namely by answering him out of Scripture, as a kind of spiritual storehouse? Hear a

perfect description of the Christian man's armour. *Isaiab lix. He put on, says Isaiab, righteousness as a breast-plate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for cloathing, and was clad with zeal as with a cloak.* Let us next have recourse to St Paul, 2 Cor. x. and we shall find, that *the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong-holds. Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.* Again, he speaks of the whole armour of God, whereby ye may be able to withstand in the evil day. *Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God, Eph. vi.* A man thus armed may boldly cry out with St Paul in that noble

noble challenge, *Rom. viii. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? These are dreadful enemies, in the esteem of the generality of mankind, which he defies; but what follows is still greater: Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, thro' him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come: nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* With what courage and confidence is *Paul*, a puny man, inspired by putting on the armour of light, who elsewhere calls himself the *off-scouring of all things*? Such strength and boldness nothing but the holy Scriptures can bestow, so that he who is daily conversant in them, will have no need of any further instruction. But the arms which the Scriptures provide, being of a more weighty and bulky kind, I would recommend *this Manual* to the Christian reader, as a sort of *Poinard*, which

never need be without, but wherever he is, or whatever his business, he may still carry *this* about him; so that he need not be exposed to the attacks of the subtle enemy, defenceless and unarmed, for want of a weapon that may be useful, and at the same time portable without the least encumbrance. For though it be little, yet if joined with the shield of Faith, you may be able to withstand any sudden onset, and by this means ward off a mortal blow. But it is high time now to teach you the use of it, which when you have learned by constant practise, may the great Captain of our Salvation lead you in triumph to the heavenly *Jerusalem*, where wars will cease, and consummate peace be enjoyed; remembering in the mean time, that a brave *defiance* only will ensure us a compleat victory.



C H A P. III.

Of the Knowledge of one's self : and the two kinds of Wisdom, true and false.

HAPPINESS, though of a mistaken kind, is the point which worldly men aim at in all their actions. The Philosophers likewise promised it, though in vain, to *their* disciples ; since Christ alone can give, that which the world could *not* give, *John* xiv. And there is but one way to obtain this blessing, namely, by warring with our own inclinations, and subduing our vicious appetites. For God, who is our peace, beareth an irreconcilable hatred to those enemies, himself being all perfection, and the source and life of the same perfections in us. Now the Stoics, whose zeal for virtue was the most distinguished, branded with the name of *foolishness* every sinful pollution, the same that in Scripture is called *wickedness*.

As on the other hand, they both agree in bestowing the name of Wisdom on perfect Goodness. How much the latter is superior to the former, let the Oracle of the Wise man testify. The author and promoter of all wickedness is *Belial*, the prince of darkness, after whose example whosoever walketh in darkness, shall be overwhelmed in eternal night. On the contrary, Christ is the true light, that scattereth the mists of worldly wisdom; the brightness of his Father's glory; even *their* Justification and Redemption, who are regenerate, and according to *St Paul*, he is wisdom itself. *We preach*, says he, *Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.* In like manner, if we follow his example, shall we also get the better of wickedness, which is our greatest enemy, and be both wise and victorious in him our Commander.

THIS is that Wisdom (so contrary to that of the world, which fools admire) that you ought to pursue; for worldly wisdom,
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agreeably to *St Paul*, is arrant folly, which must be put away by him, who would be truly wise. *If any one among you (says he) seems to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world, is foolishness with God. And a little before, It is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and I will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?* 1 Cor. i. Even at this time of day, I doubt not but there will be many prudent fools, and blind leaders of the blind, that will zealously oppose you, and call you madman, ignorant, and foolish, in this your intended desertion to the part of Christ. These are *nominal* Christians, mere opposers, and contemners of the Christian institution. But be not moved by their insolence; their wretched blindness is more to be pitied, than followed. For what an absurd kind of wisdom must that be, that is acute in discerning trifles, or perhaps in providing for their lusts; but where Salvation

vation is at stake, to have no more understanding than a horse or mule? *St Paul's* advice is, to be wise as concerning good, but harmless unto evil. They, on the contrary, are wise to do evil, but are ignorant how to do good.

THE Greek poet *Hesiod* observes, that a man must be good for nothing, that is neither capable of giving, nor of taking good advice: what opinion then must we entertain of such, as are not only extremely foolish themselves, but deride and put a stumbling-block in the way of others, that are desirous of becoming wise unto Salvation? But shall they not be paid in their own coin? *Psalms* ii. *He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.* In the book of *Wisdom* it is written, *They shall see him whom they have despised, but the Lord shall laugh them to scorn.* To be laughed at by wicked men, is a species of commendation; and it is a kind of religious duty to suffer in this respect, after the example of Christ and his Apostles: but it is a most horrible thing to be set at nought of God. *I also (saith Wisdom)*

Wisdom) *shall laugh at your destruction, and shall mock, when that which you were afraid of shall come upon you; namely, when they being risen at length, shall say, This was he whom we had sometimes in derision, and a proverb of reproach. We fools accounted his life madness, and his end to be without honour.*

THE carnal wisdom we have been speaking of is, as St James observes, *devilish, and enmity with God, whose end is destruction*; because it is ever attended with pride; and pride begets blindness, and blindness enflames the passions, and obedience to the passions is productive of licentiousness, and every kind of vice, and licentiousness grows to a habit, and a habit of sin produces a reprobate mind, that is grown *callous, and past all sense of feeling*, which ends in the destruction both of body and soul.

SUCH is the wisdom of this world, and such its dismal consequences.—But the true wisdom, which the world calls *folly*, is thus described; *All good things together came to me with her, and innumerable riches in her hands. And I rejoiced in them all, because*

because wisdom goeth before them: and I knew not that she was the mother of them.

For modesty and meekness are her constant attendants. And meekness qualifies us to receive the holy Spirit, for he delighteth to abide with the lowly and meek. And when our minds are anointed with this holy unction, we are immediately enriched with all kinds of virtue, and its blessed fruits; the chief whereof is that inward and spiritual joy, which the world can neither give nor take away, and can only be exceeded in the world to come. That, brethren, is the wisdom which we ought earnestly to pray for, according to *St James*, and to search as for hidden treasures in the mines of holy Scripture.

To know one's self, is a principal part of wisdom, and was thought by antiquity to be a rule sent down from heaven; inso-much as many grave authors have considered it as the compendium of all wisdom: but among Christians is of no farther weight, than as it falls in with the sense of the sacred writings. Indeed no man should rashly assert that he knows himself; for
scarce

scarce does any one know the constitution of his own body, much less the complection and disposition of his soul. *St Paul*, who had been rapt into the third heaven, tho' so highly favoured, did not pretend to judge himself, which he might safely have done, if he had been thoroughly acquainted with himself. Now if one so spiritual, as was *Paul*, (who judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man) did not perfectly understand himself; how can we who are carnal presume so to do? Again, he is but a bad soldier, who knows neither his own strength, nor that of the enemy. Now man is not at war with man, but with himself, for even in his own breast there arises a troop in array against him. And the difference betwixt friend and foe is so small, that without due care he is in danger of mistaking one for the other, and of treating them accordingly. *Joshua* suspected even an Angel of light, saying chapter v. *Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?* Seeing therefore you now have undertaken to fight against yourself, and there is no prospect of a victory, but by a distinct Self-
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Knowledge; I will proceed next to draw your portrait, that you may thoroughly know and contemplate your own likeness.



C H A P. IV.

Of the outer and inner Man.

MA N is a prodigious compound of two or three distinct parts, resembling a God in his interior, a brute in his exterior. And he is so far from having the advantage of brutes in bodily perfections, that he falls vastly short of them in all respects. But with regard to his mind, he may vie even with angels, and be united to God. Without a body, we had been Gods; without a soul, mere beasts. These two natures, as contrary to each other as they may seem, God had happily joined together in one; but the Devil, the enemy of peace, has made an irreconcilable breach betwixt them, so that now we may well apply that verse of *Martial*, by turns to either,

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ther, "That there is no living with thee, nor without thee : " such is the strife betwixt them, who were one before, but now two opposite parties. For the body being visible, mortal, and material, delights in things like itself, and therefore pursues nothing but the gross and fleeting objects of sense. The mind, on the contrary, looks up attentively to its celestial origin, struggles with this veil of flesh, and knowing the vanity of the things seen, it dwells on substantial, eternal delights. Being immortal, it affects immortality ; heavenly, it longeth for heaven.—It pursues objects of the same nature with itself, if it be not degenerate, and infected by its commerce with the body. Now this was not the original constitution of our nature, but the effects of sin, which corrupting what was created pure, sowed in us the seeds of eternal discord.

FOR at first the soul gave command to the body, and that readily obeyed the dictates thereof ; but now, by a strange perverting of order, the corporeal affections give law to reason, and she is obliged at length,

length, to comply with their motions. The mind of man therefore may be compared to a seditious *State*, which being composed of divers ranks and orders of men, must be, on account of their different interests and inclinations, distracted with endless divisions and commotions, except there be some one in the highest authority, able and willing to consult for the good of the whole. Now who should controul, but the wisest; who obey, but the simplest? And what can be more stupid, than the dregs of the people, that are ever fitter to be governed, than to be put into the magistracy? The Nobles and Elders indeed ought to be consulted, but not so as to decide and determine matters, that being the province only of the Sovereign; who may be admonished, but must not be resisted. And the King is to submit to law, which corresponds with right reason. But if it should happen, though never so preposterously, that the seditious and unruly multitude should set themselves up above the nobility, and the nobles likewise should bid defiance to their king, there then
would

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would arise a most dangerous tumult in the body politic, which would naturally end in its final ruin and destruction, without the interposition of divine providence for its protection.

Now Reason is sole monarch in this little world of man. And his nobles are certain Affections of the body, which tho' corporeal, are not however brutal. In this rank we may place, natural affection to our parents, love of our brethren, good-will to our friends, pity upon the distressed, fear of shame, regard to character; and such like.

BUT those passions, which are the least subject to reason, and degrade our natures below the very beasts, those may be esteemed the dregs of the people; such as are lust, luxury, envy, and the like diseases of the mind; which, like base and worthless slaves, should be all confined as it were in a workhouse, and obliged to daily labour, that at least they may do no harm, if they be not useful to their master.

THESE things are set in a very just light by the almost inspired *Plato*; who

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writes,

writes, that the sons of the Gods formed in Man as it were two kinds of souls, the one immortal and divine, the other mortal, and subject to various passions. The first of these is called Pleasure, the allurements to evil; the next Pain, the impediment to good: after that come Fear and Boldness, the worst of counsellors, which are followed by implacable Rage: last of all enter flattering Hope with blind Instinct, and all-powerful Love. These, I think, are his very words. Nor was he insensible that the happiness of life consists altogether in the conquest of them: for he observes in the same place, that they who get the mastery over them, would lead good lives; on the contrary, they must needs live ill, who are under their influence. And moreover, he considers the rational soul, as stationed in the Brain, like a King residing in his castle; that being the most exalted part of the body, and nearest to heaven; the least brutal likewise, as it consists of a very thin bone, not cumbered with flesh and nerves, but fortified both within and without with the senses, as so many intelligencers, to acquaint

acquaint it with the least stir or commotion in our republic.

BUT the parts or affections of the irrational soul, were removed at a greater or less distance from the other, in proportion as they were more or less obedient to reason. Thus he places Anger and Fortitude, two seditious and ungovernable, but least brutal inclinations of the soul, between the neck and the diaphragm, that is, in a middle space between the upper and lower regions of the body; signifying thereby, that a nearer neighbourhood of them, would destroy the peace of their governor; and a farther distance from him, would endanger and taint their loyalty by the example of the lowest order. The last power he mentions, and which takes in our natural appetites, whereby mankind is preserved and propagated, is seated in the lowest parts of the body in the liver and the belly, being banished as it were from the palace to the stable, where it lives under confinement, like a fierce unruly beast, that is the most tumultuous and rebellious subject of reason. The motions of concupiscence so frequently

excited in us by the carnal member, in spite of the remonstrances of the governing principle, plainly declare the brutishness of this our lowest class. So that man you see is a God above, and below a beast. Notwithstanding which the majesty of reason, sitting on a throne, and providing for the general good, remembers its great original, and stoops not to low and vulgar sentiments: but adorned with an ivory scepter, fit emblem of rectitude, upon the top whereof percheth an Eagle (as saith *Homer*), she towereth above the clouds, and looks with scorn on all things below.

LASTLY, she is crowned with a golden crown; for gold, in a mystical sense, is used to denote wisdom, and a circle, the perfection of any thing. Now these are the peculiar properties of a king. First, he ought to be wise, lest he should err through mere ignorance: next, he should resolve to do what he thinks is right, that there may be no bias on his will to make him swerve from his better judgement. And whoever reigns without these qualifications, he is no king, but a public robber.



C H A P. V.

*Of the different passions and inclinations of
Men.*

NOW this our Ruler aforesaid, ever mindful of the eternal law written in his heart by the finger of GOD, however he may be overpowered, can never be compelled to keep silence, and not remonstrate against the breach thereof. And if the vulgar would but hear his voice, he would never advise any thing that they need be sorry for or ashamed of, but on the contrary life would be ordered with the greatest moderation and happiness. The Stoics indeed and Peripatetics differ in their doctrine of the passions, but all agree in this, that we are to follow reason, not inclination. The former assert, that when by means of the passions, which are immediately excited by the senses, you have arrived

rived at the true knowledge and distinction of good and evil, that then they are to be laid aside, as not only useless, but even prejudicial in the pursuit of wisdom.

AND accordingly, they say, that a perfectly wise man must be free from all perturbations, which they consider as so many diseases of the mind : and they will scarcely give him leave to have those natural emotions that are too quick for thought, and which they call fancies or imaginations. But the latter are not for extirpating the affections, but only subduing them : they being implanted by nature, as motives and incentives to virtue ; thus anger is a spur to courage, envy to industry, and so of the rest. But *Socrates*, whose opinion was, that Philosophy is only the attentive consideration of Death, by which he meant that the mind should be taken off as much as possible from sensible and corporeal objects, and fixed on such as are known by reason, not by sense, seems to be of the same opinion, as the Stoics.—A man should therefore in the first place study his own inclinations, and know them all. In the next,

next, he may assure himself, that there are none so violent, but they may be calmed by reason, if not brought over to the side of virtue. Although some there are, that lay the blame of their vices on necessity, as if they had it not in their power to refrain. Others again, for want of knowing themselves, think they are following reason, when they are gratifying their passions, and call that zeal, which is the effect of wrath and envy. Moreover, as one state oftentimes is more seditious than another, so on the contrary is one man more virtuously disposed than another. Which difference proceeds not from the nature of the soul, but is caused by the celestial influences, by birth, education, or bodily temper and constitution.

Socrates, in his fable of tame and vicious horses, has set this matter in a very just light. For some there are of so gentle and tractable a nature, that they move on easily and steadily in a course of virtue, without waiting for the lash to mend their speed. Others, on the contrary, have a most perverse constitution, which like a
mad

mad horse would spurn, and throw its weary rider, did he not use both curb and rein to hold him in, or sometimes whip and spur him on, till he has mastered and brought down his pampered spirit. Do not however despair, though such a disposition should fall to your lot; but strive rather the more earnestly, knowing that virtue is not unattainable by you, but rather that you have an opportunity of laying in a greater stock. But if you happen to be of a better complexion of soul, know that thou art by nature happier, but not a jot more virtuous. And the greater your happiness is, the greater your obligation. But indeed who is there so happily framed, as not to have many vices to struggle with? Where then the greatest danger is, there must we watch with the most circumspection. Some crimes are in a manner national; as treachery, lust, and luxury are in certain places. Others are constitutional; as the sanguine, for instance, love women and pleasure; the choleric are addicted to anger, wrath, and evil-speaking; the phlegmatic to sloth and heaviness,

heaviness, the melancholy to envy, grief, and bitterness.

SOME grow stronger or weaker in proportion to the age of man; as lust, extravagance, and heedlessness, prevail in youth; parsimony, moroseness, and covetousness, in old age. Others are peculiar to the sexes; as fierceness to the male, vanity and revenge to the female. But nature, as if her design was to atone for these defects, very often recompences them by some opposite good qualities. Thus one man is a lover of pleasure, but then he is free from wrath and envy. Another is remarkably chaste, but he is proud, passionate, and covetous. There are a few that are tempted to commit great and capital crimes, such as theft, sacrilege, and murder; who should arm themselves with the strongest resolution, and firmest endeavours never to be guilty of them. On the other hand, certain propensities there are so near a-kin to virtue, that there is danger of being deceived by them. These stand in need of some correction, and by a little warping may come over to the virtue that is nearest

allied to it. For instance, if a man be of a warm temper, let him curb his passion, and he will become alert, active, and sprightly, free from artifice and disguise. Is he too parsimonious? let him apply his reason, and he will make a frugal, honest man. Is he a flatterer? he can be affable and courteous. Obstinate? and he may be consistent. Morose? and he should become only serious. Trifling? and he will be easily governed: Thus may every kind of failing be converted into a perfection. Great care however is to be taken, that we do not palliate our natural vices with the name of virtues; as if we should call sullenness, gravity; moroseness, seriousness; envy, zeal; meanness, frugality; flattery, courteousness; and scoffing, wit.

THE only way then to happiness is, first to know yourself; and secondly, not to be led by your passions, but to hearken to the voice of reason in all your undertakings. By reason, I mean right reason, that which inspires good and salutary counsels. But it may be objected, that the advice here given is hard to put in practice: It is so.

fo. And it is an old proverb, That what is beautiful, is not won with ease. It is a bold task to attempt the conquest of one's self, but the reward is equal to the task. It is well said by St *Jerom*, "that one cannot be happier than a Christian, seeing he has the promise of the kingdom of heaven. One cannot be in greater danger, seeing his Salvation is at stake. One cannot be stronger, seeing he conquereth the Devil. One cannot be weaker, seeing he is overcome by the flesh." It is a most difficult thing, if you weigh your own strength, to subdue the flesh; but if you look up to the assistance of God, nothing is easier. Do you but carefully resolve upon a life of Christian perfection, and persist therein; and you will find, that the mind of man never yet firmly resolved upon any thing, but he made his resolution good. It is a great part of Christianity, to be heartily willing to become a Christian. For what at first seemeth impossible, by use and perseverance will become natural. The uphill path of virtue, at first setting out, is said to be laborious and painful; but when

one is arrived to the summit thereof, there remains nothing then but rest and safety.

THERE is no animal so fierce, but what may be tamed by the art of man ; and shall the soul, by which all other things are subdued, be itself wild and uncultivated ? How many years will some people lead a sober abstemious life by the advice merely of a Physician, in order to enjoy a tolerable share of health of body ; why then to obtain happiness, will they not set bounds to their passions for a few months, in obedience to the will of their Creator ? You will do any thing to cure your body of a distemper ; why then will you not do, at least as much as heathens did, to deliver your soul and body from eternal death ?



C H A P. VI.

Of the inner Man, and the Scripture account of both parts of him.

HOW am I ashamed of the generality of Christians, who serve their appetites

tites like brute beasts, and are so far from being masters in the art of spiritual warfare, that they do not so much as know the difference between reason and inclination. They think that to be men, it is enough that they can see and feel. Nay, they fancy that nothing exists, but what falls within the notice of their senses; when indeed nothing hath less of reality. Whatever they earnestly wish for, that they think is right. A ready compliance with their passions, they call *peace*; though it be in truth the greatest slavery, to submit the extinguished light of reason to the blind conduct and direction of their inclinations. This is that woful peace, which Christ the true peace-maker came to destroy; kindly setting at variance the father with the son, the husband with the wife, and dissolving all alliances, that spring from a bad principle of unity.

BUT Philosophy apart; let us consult the Scripture, and see if it does not say the same thing in other words. What the Philosophers call Reason, that, *St Paul* calls, sometimes the Spirit, sometimes the

inner man, and sometimes the law of the mind. The same that they term passion, is what he means by the several expressions of the flesh, the body, the outer man, and the law of the members. *Walk in the spirit*, saith he, *and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.* And elsewhere : *If ye live according to the flesh, ye shall die. But if through the spirit, ye do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.* How strange is this change, that war should produce peace, and peace war ; death life, and life death ; bondage freedom, and freedom bondage ? And in another place St Paul writes thus, *I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection.* The nature of our Christian liberty is this, that if we are led by the spirit, we are not under the law. And, we have not received the spirit of bondage unto fear, but we have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry *Abba, Father.* Again he says, *I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin,*
which

which is in my members. You read also of the outer man which is corrupt, and of the inner man which is daily renewed.

Plato lays it down for a rule, that there are two distinct souls in man: *St Paul* likewise avers, that there are two several ones in one and the self-same person, so strictly united, that they will be joint-partakers of future bliss or misery, and at the same time so contrary to each other, that one cannot live without the other's death. To this refer these words written to the *Corinthians*; *The first man, Adam, was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven, 1 Cor. xv.* And to make it clear that these words do not only relate to *Christ* and *Adam*, he adds, *As is the earthy, such are they that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have born the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.* Now this I say,

brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God ; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. You see it appears plainly, that what he elsewhere calls the flesh, and the outer man, which is corrupt, he here calls the earthy Adam. This likewise is that body of Death with which he was afflicted, and cried out, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this Death !

MORE OVER, speaking in another Place of the contrary fruits of the flesh and spirit, he says, *He that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption ; but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting.* Thus much is also signified by that old quarrel that arose between the twin-brothers, *Jacob* and *Esau*, who strove together as they lay in their mother's womb, even before they were born. *Esau* indeed was the first-born, but *Jacob* obtained the blessing. So that which is carnal comes first, but that which is spiritual is far better. One of them was red-haired and shaggy, and the other was a smooth man. This loved the calm of a domestic life,

life, that was ever restless and a hunting. One, compell'd by hunger, sold his birth-right for a mess of pottage, and greedily devouring the bait of pleasure, fell from his native freedom into the bondage of sin: the other artfully obtained by grace, what before he had no right to. Between these two brothers, though twins in their mother's womb, there never was a perfect harmony: for *Esau* hated *Jacob*; and tho' *Jacob* did not return his hatred, yet he ever suspected and avoided him, not caring to trust himself with him. In like manner ought we to distrust the motions of Passion and Inclination, knowing from whence they spring. *Jacob* only had the honour to see the LORD: *Esau*, being blood-thirsty, lived by his sword. Lastly, the LORD GOD being enquired of by their mother, answered, *The elder shall serve the younger*. To which their father subjoined, *Thou shalt serve thy brother; and the time shall come, that thou shalt shake his yoke off thy neck*. The LORD spake of holy men, their father of reprobates: the former, of what ought to be done by all; the latter, propheti-

prophetically, of what most men would do.

ST *Paul* commands the Woman to be subject to her Husband. Now Concupiscence is the *Eve*, or woman in us, whose eyes the wily serpent continually tempts; and she, being first in the transgression, goes and betrays her husband likewise into the same. But what says the Scripture of the new woman, or she that is obedient to her husband? *I will put enmity between thee (the serpent) and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.* The serpent now is fallen upon his belly, and his might is crushed by the death of CHRIST; so that he can only lie in wait to bruise the *heel* of man. But the woman being converted by the gift of Faith, like a bold Heroine, in her turn bruises his venomous head. In the same manner, an increase of Grace subdues the tyranny of the flesh. *Sarah* by the will of God was humbled, and *Abraham* exalted; so that now she no longer called him Husband, but *Lord*. Neither was she suffered to

to be pregnant, till it ceased to be with her after the manner of women. And what did she bring forth to her Lord *Abraham* in her old age? namely *Isaac*, that is to say, Joy. For when a man is old, and dead to the impulse of passion, then only can he be said to enjoy true felicity, and the perpetual feast of an innocent, quiet mind.

AND as *Abraham* was guilty of no mean compliances with his wife, so he seemed to be afraid of too great an intimacy between his children, *Isaac* and *Ishmael*. Even at that age, he did not chuse that the son of the free woman should converse with the son of the bondslave. In his tender years *Ishmael* was banished, lest he should corrupt the young *Isaac* by his bad example. *Abraham* and *Sarah* were both grown old; and though she had brought him *Isaac* his son, yet did he not hearken to her counsel, till it had been approved and confirmed by the divine Oracle. He had no dependance upon the woman, till the LORD had ordained, *In all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice.* How happy
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are they, who in their old age have so perfectly subdued the earthly man, as that it gives no interruption to the spirit: but whether so great a harmony is attainable by mortal men, or whether it is expedient for them, I am utterly uncertain. For even to *Paul* himself *there was given a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him, lest he should be exalted above measure.* And though he besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from him, he received this answer, *My Grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.* What a new and marvellous remedy is this, that *Paul* should be tempted with pride to humble his pride; and be forced to confess, that he was weak in himself, in order to become strong thro' Christ? For he held the treasure of divine Revelations in earthen vessels, that the power might be from God, and not of himself.

THIS one instance of the Apostle affords many useful lessons: As first, when we are tempted by our lusts, we are here taught to pray continually for the divine blessing and assistance. Secondly, we find
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by this, that temptations are so far from being dangerous to perfect men, that they are even necessary for the defence of their virtue. Lastly, that of all our vices, Vain-glory is the last to be subdued, which preys upon us even in the midst of all our virtues. It is the Hydra of *Hercules*, which revives under its wounds; and when we have done all, can scarce be slain by our utmost efforts. But labour and perseverance overcome all difficulties. — When your mind is at any time rack'd and toss'd by the storm of different passions, use your best endeavours to assuage and calm them; for this is the *Proteus* that you ought to bind as fast as you can, till he returns to his native form: of whom the Poet thus sings;

He, not unmindful of his usual art,
First in dissembled Fire attempts to part;
Then roaring Beasts, and running Streams he tries,
And wearies all his miracle of lies.

What indeed so nearly resembles this fabulous God, as the Passions and Inclinations of fools, which drive them by turns
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to the various excesses of brutish lust, fierce anger, and envenomed envy, and every other the most prodigious kind of vice? The Poet proceeds in describing *Proteus* after this manner :

Thus surely bound, yet be not over bold,
The slipp'ry God will try to loose his hold,
And various forms assume, to cheat thy sight,
And with vain images of Beasts affright ;
With foamy tusks will seem a bristly Boar,
Or imitate the Lion's angry roar ;
Break out in crackling Flames to shun thy snares,
Or hiss a Dragon, or a Tiger stares ;
Or, with a wile thy caution to betray,
In fleeting Streams attempt to slide away.

THEN follows the necessary caution to be taken in subduing our passions :

But thou, the more he varies form, beware
To strain his fetters with a stricter care ;
Till tiring all his arts, he turns again
To his true shape, in which he first was seen.

BUT to have done with the Poet's Fables—let us persist constantly, like the Patriarch *Jacob*, in wrestling all night, till the day breaketh, and we have obtained
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the assistance of GOD; and say unto him, in like manner, *I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.* Gen. xxxii. 26. It is worth our observing, what reward that brave wrestler obtained for his courage: In the first place, GOD blessed him on the very spot: For when a temptation is resisted, there is an increase of Grace given after it, whereby we are much strengthened against every future assault of the enemy. Secondly, GOD touched the hollow of *Jacob's* thigh, so that the sinew shrank, and he went lame of one foot. GOD, by the mouth of his Prophet, denounces a curse on those who halt with both feet; that is, who at the same time strive to please him, and yet live according to the flesh: and whilst they would fain do both, have the right use of neither. On the contrary, happy are they, who being touched by the hand of GOD, become dead to the flesh, and walk on the right foot, or by the direction of his Spirit. Lastly, the Patriarch's name was changed from *Jacob* to *Israel*; that is, from a Wrestler he became Peaceable. For when the flesh is chastised,

chastised, and crucified with its affections and lusts, then nothing hinders, but that you may enjoy full leisure and liberty to see GOD, and *taste how gracious the Lord is*: thus much is implied in the name of *Israel*. Now GOD is not seen in the fire, nor in the earthquake, nor in the whirlwind of human temptations; but after that you have endured the fury and trial of the Devil, there followeth *a still, small voice* of spiritual consolation: when that gently whispereth, then lift up the eyes of your mind, and you will say like another *Israel, I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved*. You will see him spiritually, who hath said, that *no flesh* shall see him. Examine well yourself—If thou *art flesh*, thou shalt not see GOD; but if thou see him not, thou shalt not be saved. Well therefore does it behove thee to be in the Spirit.





C H A P. VII.

Of the Spirit, Soul, and Body; or, the three constituent parts of Man.

ALthough enough has been said upon this head already, yet that you may know *Yourself* more accurately, I shall add a brief account of the division of Man, according to *Origen*; who, after the example of *St Paul*, layeth down three several parts, *the Spirit, the Soul, and the Body*; all which *St Paul* joins together, in his Epistle to the *Thessalonians*; thus speaking, *I pray God your whole Spirit, and Soul, and Body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* *Isaiab*, leaving out the inferior part, makes mention only of the other two; saying, *My Soul shall long after thee in the night time, and with my Spirit will I watch unto thee early in the morning.* Thus *Daniel* singeth; O ye

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Spirits,

Spirits, and Souls of the righteous, bless ye the Lord. From these places *Origen* collected the threefold partition of man : the Body or flesh, which is the worst part of us, being by the original transgression stamped with the impressions of sin by means of the subtle Tempter, and which leading us into all filthiness, maketh us one with the Devil.—The Spirit, wherein we are the image of God, which is inscribed as it were by the finger of the merciful Creator, with the eternal law of rectitude taken from the original in the divine mind, whereby we are united, and joined in nature unto God. And lastly, the Soul, which is a middle kind of being, the seat of the senses and natural inclinations. It liveth as it were in a factious community, and is obliged to accede to one or other party. Tempted on both sides, but at liberty to chuse which it pleases.

If it renounces the flesh, and goes over to the spirit, it will be spiritual likewise : but if it descends to comply with the desires of the flesh, it will degenerate itself and become corporeal. To this agreeth

St

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St Paul, in his epistle to the Corinthians, where he saith, *What, know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot, is one body? for two (saith he) shall be one flesh. But he that is joined to the Lord, is one spirit,* ch. vi. 16, 17. By an harlot, St Paul must be understood to signify the weakest part of man, even that which is obnoxious to the greatest frailty. This is that alluring deceitful woman, of whom you read in *Proverbs*, ch. ii. *To deliver thee from the strange woman, even from the stranger which flattereth with her words. Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God. For her house inclineth unto death; and her paths unto the dead: none that go unto her return again; neither take they hold of the paths of life.* Likewise in the sixth chapter, *To keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman. Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids. For by means of a whorish woman, a man is brought to a piece of bread; and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life.* When he speaks of the woman, the heart,

and the life, does not he expressly make mention of the three parts of man? Again in the ninth chapter, *A foolish woman is clamorous, she is simple and knoweth nothing. For she sitteth at the door of her house on a seat, in the high places of the city; to call passengers who go right on their ways. Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: and as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him; Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant. But he knoweth not that the dead are there, and that her guests are in the depths of hell. But he that departeth from her, shall be saved. Is it possible there could be a better picture drawn of the pernicious charms of the flesh tempting the soul to sin, or of its impiety in resisting the spirit, or the misery of yielding to it? It is the spirit therefore that makes us Gods, the flesh that makes us brute beasts. It is owing to the Soul, that we are men,—for by the spirit we are good, as by the flesh we are bad, and the soul is indifferent to either. The first seeketh heavenly things; the second, pleasure; and the last, requireth the necessities of nature.*

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The spirit exalteth us to heaven, the flesh sinketh us down to hell; whereas the soul is not accountable of itself. Whatsoever is carnal, is base; whatsoever is spiritual, is perfect; whatsoever appertaineth to us, as mere animals, is indifferent. But to speak of this division of man in still plainer terms, and level to the meanest capacities. — You may say, for instance, that you honour your parents, love your relations, your children, and your friend. Where is the great virtue of all this? rather, is it not a crime not to do it? It is a great matter indeed for you, who are a Christian, to do no other than did the *Gentiles* by natural instinct, yea and the very brutes themselves do. Natural propensities will not be imputed as merit. But if it should happen so that either you must renounce your father; neglect your children, and despise your friends, or offend God? What in that case would you do? Here the Soul is perplexed, and equally moved by the Spirit and the Flesh. The Spirit suggests, that God is better than a parent; to the

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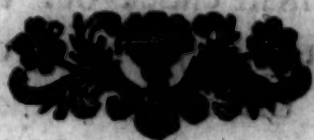
latter you owe your Body only, but to the former every thing you enjoy. The flesh on the other hand insinuates, that if you do not comply, your father will disinherir you, and you will be called an undutiful son. Consider then your interest, consider your good name. God either does not, or will not see it; and at worst is easily appeased. And now the soul is in a strait betwixt two. Which way soever it inclines, it will partake of the nature thereof. If it defies the spirit, and cleaveth to the flesh, as to an harlot, it will become one body with it. Whereas, if despising the latter, it mounts up to the former, it will be one spirit. After this manner accustom yourself to enter into a strict scrutiny with your soul. For it is a great mistake men give into, when they impute that to the most religious motives, which is only the effect of pure nature. Unwary men are often imposed upon by certain qualities, which have a great appearance of integrity, and are concealed under the mask of virtue. Thus, for instance, a judge inveighs against a criminal,

nal, and fancies himself righteous and uncorrupt in so doing. What now are we to think of him? If this proceeds from inclination, and the natural rigour of his disposition, without his taking any pain or pleasure therein, though he does nothing unbecoming the office of a judge, yet it is an indifferent thing, and he has no great reason to be proud of it. But if he abuses the law to execute his own revenge, or serve his private purpose, he then is guilty of murder, and it is a carnal brutish act: as on the other hand, if he is greatly concerned, that he must cut off one, whom he had rather amend and save than destroy, and inflicts condign punishment, with the same reluctance that a father commands his dearest son to suffer stripes or death, then only is it a spiritual and meritorious act.

MOST men have a natural propensity to some things, as well as an aversion to others. There are those who take no delight even in venereal enjoyments: But let them not boast of that, which in itself is a thing of an indifferent nature. For to want desire is no virtue, but to have and conquer

quer it. One man approves of fasting, another loves attendance on divine worship, a third will be able to repeat the whole Psalter—but examine what each does by the spiritual rule laid down already. If a man has a regard to his character or interest in it, it is plain it proceeds from the Flesh, and not the Spirit. If he pursues his natural bent, and does no more than what he likes; so far from having done any thing to be proud of, he has great reason to fear. And here lies the danger: You pray, it is true, and you condemn him that prayeth not. You fast also, but you censure him that eateth. Whoever does not as you do, you think is not so good as you are. There is reason then to fear, your fast proceeds from carnal motives. Your brother is in want, whilst you, taking no notice thereof, mutter over your prayers to God, who *therefore* rejecteth and despiseth them. For how shall God hear *your* prayers, when you, being but a man, are deaf to man's entreaties? To give one instance more,—You love your wife, because she is your wife. What is this more than

than heathens do? And why do you love her? because she gives you pleasure: then is your love carnal indeed. But if the ground of your love be, that in her you behold the image of Christ, for religion, modesty, temperance, and chastity; and further, if you do not love her for her own, but for Christ's sake, or rather Christ himself in this his lovely picture, then truly is your love spiritual.—But of this more will be said in its proper place.



H

General



General RULES of true RELIGION.

HAVING only paved the way hitherto, and given a kind of rough draught of the thing proposed, it is now time to proceed to other matters, lest this Manual should swell to a large volume. And here I shall endeavour to lay down some short Rules, by way of clue to lead you through the intricate mazes of this erroneous world, into a spiritual life of blifs and liberty. Every art and science has its proper rules and maxims, and shall the art of being happy alone be destitute of them? Now virtue is a kind of *institution*, wherein they only who are well versed and grounded, find the assistance of the holy Spirit,

Spirit, the great promoter of mens best endeavours. But they who say, *Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways,* will be abandoned by the divine mercy, for that they hated knowledge. Now the Rules I am about to lay down, relate either to persons, and these are God, the Devil, and Ourselves; or things, as Virtue and Vice, for instance, with the several circumstances, and matters they are conversant in: and they are chiefly opposed to three kinds of evils, the remains of original sin. For though Baptism hath taken away the pollution, yet there always will abide in us so much of the first disease, as may be a guard upon our humility, and at the same time an exercise and improvement of our virtue. These evils are blindness, lust, and infirmity. Blindness is that cloud of ignorance, which darkens and eclipses the understanding. For that bright image of God, in which man was made, is obscured not only by the transgression of our first parents; but also by bad education, evil company, perverse affections, the deformity of vice, and habits of sin,

which have all so effaced the law of God written on our hearts, that scarce any traces of it can be seen there. Blindness therefore (as I was saying) is the cause why men generally err in the choice of things, rejecting good for bad, profitable for unprofitable. Lust bribes our affections, that though we know what is right and good, yet we love it not, but rather chuse its contrary. Infirmary makes us relinquish the virtue we had once embraced, either through weariness or temptation. Blindness impedes the judgement; lust corrupts the will; and infirmity saps our constancy. The first thing then we have to do, is to distinguish what to avoid, and what to pursue; and our blindness ought to be removed, to enable us to make a right choice of things. In the next place, when we know good from evil, we should chuse the one, and refuse the other; and to this end we must subdue the flesh, that it may not tempt us to prefer pleasure to virtue, against the sense of our minds. The third thing is to persevere in well-doing, and our weakness must therefore be supported, that

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we forsake not the path of virtue, with more shame, than if we had never entered into it. Our ignorance is to be informed, that we may know the right way; our flesh to be tamed, that we may not deviate into by-paths; our infirmity to be animated, that when we have gone on in the narrow way for some time, we may neither stop nor turn another way, nor having once set our hands to the plough, look back; but that we rejoice as a Giant to run his course, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, until we lay hold of the prize, the crown laid up for them that persevere unto the end. To these three things will our rules be severally adapted.



R U L E I.

The necessity of Faith.

SINCE Faith is the only way and means to come to Christ, it ought to be

be our first care to entertain the highest opinion of him, and of the Scriptures inspired by his Spirit. And our belief in them ought to be expressed, not by our lips only, or in a cold, careless, sceptical manner, as the generality of Christians do; but we should be sincerely and thoroughly persuaded, that there is not one jot or tittle in them, but what highly concerns our everlasting Salvation. Be not moved, tho' you see a great part of mankind live, as though there were neither Heaven nor Hell, or as if these things were old wives Tales, fit only to frighten or influence children. But let your Faith support you. For tho' the whole world should run mad to a man, though the elements should be confounded, and even Angels themselves revolt; yet cannot that be false, which Truth itself has asserted; and that which God hath foretold shall, yea, and must come to pass. If you believe a God, you must believe him to be true. Lay it down then for certain, yea, and much more to be depended upon, than any thing that we hear, see, or handle can be, that there is no
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where to be found so infallible truth as what is to be met with in these books, which were inspired by the God of truth; promulged by the holy Prophets; sealed by the blood of all the Martyrs; believed by pious Men for many ages; delivered by Christ incarnate in word, and obeyed in deed; ratified by Miracles; acknowledged with horror by Devils; and lastly, which are so consistent with the law of nature, and with themselves, and that work such wonderful effects upon those who read them with attention and reverence. If these great arguments are compatible with no other writings in the world, what madness is it for us to waver in our Faith? Reason only by analogy from what is past—Did not the Prophets foretel wonderful and almost incredible things of Christ? And which of them came not to pass? And shall he who deceived you not in these events, deceive you in other matters? In a word, the Prophets lied not, and shall Christ who sent them lie? If by such thoughts as these you often fan the holy flame of Faith, and earnestly pray to God

to give you an encrease thereof, I should wonder if you could continue bad any longer. For what man can be so desperately wicked, as not to start back and abhor sin, if he truly believes, that by a few momentary gratifications here, he incurs, not the apprehensions of a bad conscience only, but eternal torments? On the other hand, that good men, by a few light afflictions, will obtain not only the manifold blessings of a good conscience here, but a happy immortality hereafter.



R U L E II.

Of Irresolution.

THE first thing to be observed is, that you place an entire confidence in the promises of God: the next, that you seriously and earnestly resolve to run the race of Salvation, and be content to risque life or fortune for the sake of Christ; which

which cowardice and sloth can never attain to: for the slothful man will and he will not. The kingdom of heaven is not to be had by wishing for, but it suffereth violence gladly, and the violent take it by force. When you aim therefore at this mark, let not your friends, nor your business divert your purpose. Worldly affairs must either fall in with it, or else be broke off, and left undone. The flesh pots of *Egypt* must be no temptation to you to go back again. You must flee out of *Sodom* without looking back; for the woman looked behind her and perished. *Lot*, her husband, ventured not to stay in any part of the flat country, but escaped in all haste to the mountain, as he was commanded. The Prophet cries, *Let us flee out of the midst of Babylon*; and the going out of *Egypt* is called a flight. We are commanded to *flee* out of *Babylon*, not to steal out gradually and unobserved. We see most men deferring their amendment from time to time, and too irresolutely putting off their departure from vice: when we have put an end to such or such an affair, say they, we will mend

mend our lives, or when we are delivered out of such and such troubles. *Thou fool, what if thy soul should this night be required of thee?* Are you to be told, that one business brings on another? and that vice begets vice? Why will you not do that to day, which the sooner it is done, it is so much the easier? Other things require diligence, but this the utmost speed. Do not weigh and consider with yourself, how much in this case you may lose, but be assured that Christ will repay you all. Only trust in him with confidence, and instead of depending on your own abilities, cast all your care upon him. Lean not to your own understanding, but let your hope be in him, and he will receive you. Put thy trust in GOD, and he will lead thee, and thou mayest say with the Psalmist, *The Lord is my shepherd, therefore can I lack nothing. He shall feed me in a green pasture; and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort.* Do not desire to share yourself betwixt these two, the world and Christ. For you cannot serve two masters,—there is no concord betwixt GOD and *Belial*,—
he

he endureth not them that halt between two opinions, — and he speweth up those, who are neither cold nor hot, but lukewarm. God is a jealous lover of souls, he will not bear a rival in the possession of that, which he hath redeemed with his blood. He will not admit of partnership with the Devil, whom he *once for all overcame by his death*. There are but two paths; the one leadeth to destruction, by following our lusts; the other, by mortification of the flesh, tendeth to life. What room is there for doubt, when there is no third way? one of these two you must needs follow, whether you will or no; — whoever thou art, or whatsoever thy condition, the narrow way is that which thou shouldst go, though few men walk therein. Christ himself, and all that have ever pleased God from the foundation of the world, have trod this path, and this only.

THERE is an invincible necessity, that we should die unto the world, as Christ died, if *we would reign with him* in the next. What fools then are we to flatter and impose upon ourselves in a thing of so great moment

moment? For one says, I am no Priest, but a secular Man, and must make what use I can of the world. Another thinks with himself, that though he is a Priest, he is no Monk, and so let him look to it. The Monk likewise flatters himself, and cries, though I am a Monk, yet such and such people are Monks of a stricter order. Again, a third will say, I am young, rich, noble, a Courtier, yea, and a King; it signifies nothing to me, what Christ preached to his *Apostles*. But is it nothing then to you, to be in Christ? for if you are in the world, you are not in Christ:—in some sense indeed we are all in the world, if by the world be meant, the Heavens, the Earth, the Sea, and the Air we breath in common. But if ambition, luxury, covetousness, and lust be the world, in the worst sense, then you cannot be of *this* world, and a Christian also. Christ spake unto all alike, *If a man will not take up his cross and follow me, he is not worthy of me*. You have no occasion indeed, to mortify the flesh with Christ, if you desire not to be quickned by his Spirit. No reason

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son to be crucified unto the world, if no hopes to live with GOD; or to be buried *with Christ in baptism*, if you mean not to be raised again in glory. In short, Christ's humiliation, poverty, tribulation, contempt, labours, agonies and pains, are nothing to you, if his kingdom be nothing to you. But what can be meaner, than to expect the same reward with a few others, but to lay upon them only the difficulties by which that reward is to be attained. And what more effeminate, than to desire to triumph with the Captain of our Salvation, but to decline suffering with him? Look not round you, dear brother, to see what others do, and to flatter yourself upon a comparison. It is a very difficult task, and what very few, even Monks, are versed in, to die unto the world; to die unto sin; to die to the desires of the flesh. Yet this is the constant profession of all Christians. This is the oath which you have taken in Baptism, the most solemn oath that can be. And we must all perish without doubt, or take this way to Salvation, whether high or low, rich or poor. What if we cannot attain

attain to the perfection of that pattern mark'd out by our LORD, yet may we all endeavour to come as near it as possible: and he is not far from being a Christian, who is resolutely determin'd he will be one.



R U L E III.

The comparative ease and happiness of a Religious and Irreligious Life.

BUT that you may not easily turn aside out of the path of virtue, being displeased with its seeming roughness and horror; or because you are obliged to renounce the advantages of the world; or are weary of the continual conflict, which you must maintain against the three most inveterate enemies of mankind, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil; to prevent, I say, your being terrified at these frightful spectacles, which, like those *Aeneas* met with at the mouth of *Avernus*, you ought in like

like manner to despise, is this Rule calculated. And if in spite of false appearances, you examine the matter more closely, you will find that the Christian Institution is not only the way to bliss, but, setting aside the promised Reward, is the most commodious life that can be. For what kind of life does the world offer to your choice, wherein there are not a thousand hardships to be endured? Who is there, that is not very raw and ignorant, but sees the difficulties a Courtier is forced to submit to? What continual and abject Slavery is visible in courts? with what solicitude is the King's favour sought after? how carefully must the men in power be complimented? how often must the mask be changed, and the insults of the great ones there be dissembled? Again, what dangers is a Military life encompassed with? but they know best, who have had most experience in those ways. What does not the Merchant undertake, and submit to?

Per mare pauperium fugians, per saxa, per ignes?

To

To either *India* see the Merchant fly,
 Scar'd at the spectre of pale Poverty !
 See him, with pains of body, pangs of soul,
 Burn thro' the Tropic, freeze beneath the Pole.

POPE.

In Wedlock, what a load of domestic cares must be born? what misery do not they endure who have made trial of it? In public Embassies, what inquietude, what toil, and what dangers occur? Turn your eyes then which way you will, a world of difficulties will necessarily arise. Even life itself is liable to a thousand natural shocks, which good and bad men partake of in common. All these will but add to your score of merit, if you are found in a Christian course; otherwise, they will give you still greater uneasiness, and must nevertheless be endured, though you reap no benefit thereby. They who aim at this world's good, in the first place, how do they sweat, and toil, and vex themselves? and secondly, for what idle, momentary things? lastly, with what uncertainty? Moreover, their cares are so far from being

ing brought to a happy issue, that the longer they have toiled, so much the more is their toil increased. And what is the consequence of a life so restless and laborious? Eternal torment.

Go now, and compare this way of life with a life of virtue; that presently ceases to be disagreeable, grows easier and pleasanter by use, and at length certainly conducts us to our greatest happiness. Would it not be the height of madness, to take as much pains to be miserable, as to be eternally happy? Yet some there are so very insensible, that they would chuse rather to take infinite pains to obtain misery, than to take little or none in pursuance of everlasting bliss. Moreover, were Religion ever so much more laborious than worldly affairs, yet is the rigor of it greatly softned by the hopes of Reward, and by the Grace of God, whose assistance makes bitter sweet. Whereas in the other case, one care brings on another, and trouble begets trouble; and so on, without any intermission. Without, men meet with nothing but labour and affliction; within,

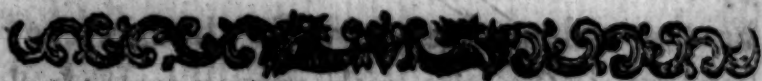
they feel a continual uneasiness of mind ; even their very diversions disgust them. That these things are so the heathen Poets likewise saw, who, under the fictitious punishments of *Tityus*, *Ixion*, *Tantalus*, *Sisyphus*, and *Pentheus*, couched the uneasy lives of wicked men. To them belongs also that too late confession in the Book of *Wisdom*; *We wearied ourselves in the way of wickedness and destruction : yea, we have gone through desarts, where there lay no way : but as for the way of the Lord, we have not known it.* What Egyptian Slavery can be more laborious or dishonourable ? what *Babylonish* Captivity more lamentable ? what yoke, even of *Pharaoh* and *Nebuchadnezzar*, more intolerable ? Whereas Christ saith, *Take my yoke upon you, and ye shall find rest unto your souls : for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.* In fine, no pleasure can be wanting, where there is a good conscience ; no misery absent, where there is a bad one. And this is what you ought never to suffer yourself to doubt of. But if you are not fully convinced, ask those who have ever been converted from

a vicious course unto the LORD; and they will tell you from their own experience, that nothing can be more uneasy and irksome than sin; nothing more agreeable and delightful than obedience. But we will only suppose, that the wages of both were the same, the dangers and difficulties alike; yet how much more desirable were it even then to fight under Christ's banner, than the Devil's? yea, how much better were it to suffer with the one, than to riot with the other? And now, shall we not endeavour earnestly to avoid so hateful, imperious, and treacherous a Master, that requires such unreasonable tasks at our hands? — that promises such trash for our Reward, and often deprives us even of that? or if he bestows it, it is only to rob us of it again, when he has a mind, to make our loss more sensible, and our toil more insufferable. The Merchant, that to raise a fortune has had no regard to right or wrong, and exposed his name, his life, his soul, to a thousand dangers; should he gain his point, what has he got by his wealth, but the care of keeping, and the

fear of losing it? But if he loses it, he is doubly wretched; both because he is disappointed of his hope, and cannot but with grief remember, what a deal of pains he has taken to no purpose. But on the contrary, no man can stedfastly resolve to be good, but he may be so. For Christ, as he is not to be mocked, so he mocketh no man. It may be of use further to take notice, that when you leave the world for Christ, you do not so much quit its possessions, as change them for better. Who would not willingly give silver for gold, a flint for a gem? Are your friends disgusted with you? What then? you will find better. Must you give up pleasures? Perhaps so. But then instead thereof, you will enjoy those internal delights, which are much more grateful, pure, and certain. Must you suffer in your estate? Be it so: however, that wealth will increase, which neither moths can devour, nor thieves break in and steal. Does the world despise you? yet Christ approves you: though few, yet the best men are pleased with you. Your Body may decay, but
your

your Soul improves : your Skin looks less florid, but your Mind grows more beautiful. And thus if you run through the whole state of the case, you'll find, that even the smallest appearances of good that the world affords, will be made up to you by a more excellent reward. And if there be any advantages, which though they cannot consistently with virtue be *desired*, may nevertheless be possessed by the virtuous; such as Popularity, Applause, Honour, Authority; Friends, Esteem of one's virtue, and the like : these commonly are all of them annexed to the men that *seek first the kingdom of God*; as was promised by Christ, and exemplified in the person of *Solomon*. Fortune is wont to pursue them that fly her, and fly her closest pursuers. But let what will come, certainly nothing can happen amiss to them that love *GOD*; whose losses are gains; whose corrections are comforts; whose dishonours are honours; whose pains are pleasures; whose afflictions are joys; and whose evils are in the event blessings. Can you then make any doubt of leaving that, and following

lowing this course of life, when the one will bear no sort of comparison with the other; whether we oppose GOD and the Devil, the different hopes, different rewards, different hardships, and different consolations?



R U L E IV.

That Christ is the End of all Things.

BUT the surest road to happiness, is to make Christ the center of all your actions: To Him let your endeavours, and even your amusements tend. Now *Christ* is to be considered not as a mere word, but as it implies Charity, Integrity, Patience, Purity, and, in short, all that he taught. And, by the Devil, you are to understand every thing that takes you off from following this. Whosoever is intent upon virtue only, draweth near to Christ; as whosoever is a slave to his lusts, is a servant of the Devil's. Therefore let your eye be single,
and

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and your whole body will be full of light; and be it fixed upon Christ, as the only sovereign good, so that you can neither love, nor admire, nor pursue any thing, but him, or on his account. On the other hand, you ought not to hate, dread, or avoid any thing, so much as Vice, or that which naturally leads to it. By this means, whatsoever you do, whether you eat or drink, wake or sleep, yea, your very pleasures, and indeed, those lesser crimes, into which men occasionally fall in their pursuit of virtue, will serve to enhance and aggrandise your reward. But if thine eye be evil, and averted from Christ, even though you should happen to do something well, it will be all lost, or turn to your prejudice: For to do a good thing in an ill manner, or from a bad principle, loses all its grace, and changes it into a sin.

MOREOVER, if in your way to happiness you should meet with any thing that challenges your regard and esteem, let it have no more or less of them, than will serve to advance your main design. Of this kind there are three degrees. For some things
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are so bad, as to be incapable of ever becoming good: such as Hatred and Revenge, which ought ever to be abhorred, whatever rewards and punishments might be offered: For a good man cannot be hurt, but by his own transgression. Other things, on the contrary, are naturally so good, that they never can be bad: such as to be charitable to all men, to assist one's friends by fair means, to hate vice, and to love godly conversation. Betwixt these two extremes, there lies a middle kind of things, such as Health, Strength, Beauty, Eloquence, Learning, and the like. This last sort you are not to desire for their own sakes, but they are to be regarded more or less, as they conduce to your main purpose. Even the Philosophers themselves had their inferior subordinate ends, wherein we are not allowed to stop; and it is incumbent on us to use, but not to acquiesce in them. Yet these very means are not all alike useful or hurtful to the followers of Christ; but they are to be received or rejected, in proportion to their weight and influence. — Knowledge, for instance, is of more importance

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portance to a virtuous life, than either Strength, Wealth, or Beauty. There is a difference too in Knowledge; for though all kinds may contribute, yet one is more directly subservient to Christian Piety than another. By this one end you are to estimate the value or worthlessness of the several means before mentioned. Are you a lover of Learning? You do well, if you love it for the sake of Christ. But if you love it from a desire to *know* only, you by that means rest there, whence you ought to have set out. But if you pursue Knowledge, that by its help you may be able to unravel the hidden meaning of Scripture, and thereby bring yourself and others to delight therein; then apply closely to your studies, but carry them on no further, than you think they may become serviceable to the cause of virtue. If you have a just confidence in your own abilities, and hope for great gains thereby in Christ, go on like a bold adventurer, to make new discoveries in the Heathen world of Knowledge; and so enrich the temple of the Lord with the spoils of the *Egyptians*. But if you appre-

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hend

hend more loss than gain thereby, have recourse to our first Rule, Know yourself, and keep within your compass. For it is better to know but little, and to love more; than to know a great deal, and not to love.

In the rank of means, Knowledge has the precedence: Then follow Health, Natural Endowments, Eloquence, Beauty, Strength, Power, Esteem, Authority, Prosperity, Reputation, Birth, Friends, and Substance; all these, as far as they can contribute to a course of virtue, are to be used, with a proviso, they should be offered to us, as we are pressing forward towards the mark; for otherwise, we are not to go out of our way for the sake of obtaining them.

HAS any one left you executor to his will, fulfil the same religiously, and *make to yourself friends of the mammon of unrighteousness*, provided it may be done with a safe conscience. But if your virtue be endangered thereby, let go the filthy lucre, and, like *Crates*, rather cast it into the midst of the sea, as an intolerable burden, than suffer it to retard your progress unto Christ. And this will be done so much the easier,

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easier, if, as I said before, you have accustomed yourself to despise the things that are without, that is, such as have no relation to the inner man. By which means it will come to pass, that you will not be too much elated, if you are possessed of wealth; nor again depressed, if it is denied or taken from you, as one who places his whole happiness in Christ alone. But if fortune should smile upon you, though you never courted her favours, this ought to make you more cautious, not more secure; because though you have an opportunity offered of exercising your virtue, yet it is ever attended with danger. However if you suspect her friendship, it is but throwing away the treacherous gift, like *Prometheus*, that so you may be more alert and active in the pursuit of the only bliss. Now they who regard money as the greatest blessing of life, and pursue it with an anxious care, and are so far happy or miserable as they obtain or come short of it, make to themselves more Gods than one. You have put money on a level with Christ, if that can make you happy or unhappy.

And the same may be said of honours, pleasures, health, and even life itself. Our zeal to follow Christ, as our main point in view, ought to be so warm, that as to other things we should be very careless and indifferent, whether they were bestowed on us or not. For as the Apostle saith, *The time is short : and it remains, that they who use this world, shall be as those who use it not.* The world, I know, considers these sentiments as the effects of folly and madness ; but yet it hath pleased God by this same folly to save those that believe. And the foolishness of God is wiser than men. By this rule therefore you are to frame your conduct. Do you follow any trade ? it is very well, if you are guilty of no fraud. But with what view is it ? to maintain your family. And why maintain them ? Is it to gain them unto Christ ? thou runnest well.—Again, thou usest thyself to fast, which is a good work in appearance. But why dost thou fast ? Is it to save your meat, or be thought a devotee ? If so, thine eye is evil. But perhaps thou dost fast, to stave off a distemper.

And

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And why art thou afraid of a distemper; is it because it will rob you of your pleasures? still thine intention is nought. But it may be, you desire to be well, in order to prosecute your studies. And to what purpose do you study, to get a Parsonage? And why that? To serve *yourself* indeed, and not Christ. In so doing, thou wanderest from the point which a Christian ought always to have in view. Another perhaps eateth, that he may enjoy health, and be enabled thereby to study and watch, from a holy purpose. Such a one hath hit the mark, though he fasted not. Whereas he who taketh care of his health, to preserve his beauty, or to satisfy his lust, hath fallen from Christ, and made another God besides him.

SOME there are among the *Romanists*, that worship certain Saints with particular ceremonies. One, for instance, pays his respects every day to *Christopher*, tho' never but before his image; with what view I pray? why because he is persuaded, that then he shall not die a violent death on that day. Another prostrates himself before

one that is called *Rock*; and why because he beleives him to be very good against the Plague. A third mutters over a few prayers to *George* or *Barbara*, by their means to save himself out of the enemies hands. This man keeps a fast to *Apollonia*, to prevent his having the tooth-ach. That goes to visit *Job's* images, to cure himself of the Itch. Some dedicate a portion of their gains to the poor, that their ship and cargo may not be cast away. Others burn a taper in honour of *St Jerom*, to recover stolen goods. In a word, there is not a single object of mens hopes and fears, but what they have made a God to preside over. And these are different in different nations; for what *Paul* can do amongst the *French*, *Jerom* does with the *Dutch**; neither can *James* or *John* pretend to do that every where, which they can do in such or such a country. This is a sort of piety, which as it terminates in bodily pains or pleasures, without the least connection with Christ, is so far from being Christian, that it is the same kind of superstition with theirs, who

* The Author wrote before the *Dutch* reformed.

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in antient times offered a tithe of their goods to *Hercules*, in hopes of growing rich; a Cock to *Æsculapius*, that they might recover from a disease; a Bull to *Neptune*, to obtain a safe voyage. The names indeed are altered, but mens ends and designs are the same in both.

You pray to God perhaps to deliver you from sudden death; whereas you ought to pray for a better mind, that death, let it come when it will, may never find you unprepared. When therefore you pray to God to spare your life, but without ever intending to amend it; what is it but desiring, that you may be indulged in an opportunity to sin as long as possible? Again, you pray for riches; but if you know not how to use them, you are praying for nothing but your destruction. In like manner you pray for health; but if it be only to abuse it, is not your devotion impious?

AGAINST what has been said last, it will be urged by certain devotees, who think that gain is godliness, and as the same Apostle says, *serve their own bellies, and not*

the Lord Jesus ; dare you then decry the honour paid to the Saints, in whom God himself is honoured. In answer to this I declare, I do not so much condemn those, who practice these things out of mere superstition ; as I do them, that with a view to their own interests cry up these things that are scarcely tolerable, as the most exalted strains of piety, and encourage the ignorance of the people for the sake of their own advantage : and though I do not condemn the latter for knowing no better, yet I cannot suffer them to mistake the means for the end, and to set the highest value upon things of the least moment. If then they will continue to request the preservation of their lives at the hands of their beloved *Rock* ; let them at least dedicate that life to the service of Christ. But they had much better pray, that their love of virtue and hatred of vice, may *both* be heightened and inflamed. And let them leave it to God, whether they shall live or die, and say with *Paul*, *Whether we live or die, we live and die unto the Lord*. But the height of Christian perfection is, to wish to die,
and

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and be with Christ; to place our chief glory and felicity in sickness, losses, and other temporal calamities, rejoicing that we are counted worthy to partake of our Saviour's sufferings, and in that respect be made like unto him. The conclusion is, that men are not so much to blame for practising the things before mentioned, as for trusting in them, without seeking any farther. I pity their infirmity, and, like *Paul*, would shew unto them a more excellent way. Thus if you compare all your deeds and undertakings with this rule, and are not content to acquiesce in the means, without proceeding farther to the end they aim at, which is Christ; you will then never mistake your way; but whatsoever you do or suffer in life, it will all have more or less tendency to the encrease and reward of your piety.

~~Christ the End of all Things~~

RULE



RULE V.

*The Duty of placing our Affections on Things
above.*

TO the foregoing Rule give me leave to add another, by way of appendix, — which is, that if you would arrive at the highest pitch of perfection, you must endeavour to take off your mind from visible objects, which are either of an imperfect or indifferent nature, and place it on the things invisible; agreeably to the former description of man. This precept is so necessary, as that for want of knowing or practising it, the generality are not religious but superstitious; and if you will except their common appellation of Christians, they come nothing short of the superstition of the *Gentiles*.

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LET us then frame to ourselves two distinct worlds, the one merely intellectual, the other corporeal. The intellectual, or, if you please, angelical, is that wherein God resides with the blessed Spirits; and the corporeal that which consists of the heavenly Bodies, and all things included therein. In the next place, Man is a third kind of world, compounded as it were of both the other; being visible with regard to his Body, but invisible in respect of his Soul. Now whereas man is a kind of *stranger* in this visible world, he ought not to set up his rest here; but by an apt allusion should compare the objects that strike upon his Senses, either to the angelical world; or, which is better, to that part of him that bears the nearest resemblance thereto; drawing lessons of morality from every thing that presents itself to his inspection. Thus, what the Sun is in this visible world, the divine Essence is in the intellectual; so likewise he is in that corresponding part of man, the Soul. The Moon here, is the same with the company of Angels, and blessed Spirits above, which is called
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the Church triumphant; the same too as your own Soul. And that influence which the Heavens have on the Earth beneath, God hath over the human Mind. The Sun rises, sets, scorches, warms, quickens, produces, ripens, attracts, attenuates, purges, hardens, softens, enlightens, calms, and exhilarates. Whatsoever therefore you observe in *it*, or in the material world, consisting of Elements, which some have distinguished from the rest; or in the grosser part of your own frame and composition, *that* accustom yourself to apply to God, and the invisible Spirit within you. By which means, you will perceive nothing but what will administer occasion to your advancement and growth in Piety. When your eyes are delighted with the glorious prospect of the Sun rising in a morning, and with his beams gladning the whole earth; then think of the happiness of the heavenly Host, whose bright eternal Sun rises continually, but never sets; — think of the sincere joys also of an innocent mind, enlightned by the holy Spirit of God: and from these notices of the visible creature

ture pray in the words of St Paul, that *He who made light to shine out of darknes, would shine himself in your heart, unto the manifestation of the knowledge of the brightness of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.* — Recollect parallel passages of Scripture, in which *Light* is almost every where a type of the Grace of GOD. Is the night gloomy and dreadful? what then must the condition of that Soul be that is unenlightned by Grace, and overcast with the foul mists of vice and folly? And if you find your own soul to be of that black and sooty complection, pray that *the Sun of Righteousness may arise once more*, and re-illumine it. Upon the whole, you may conclude, that so far is it from being true that there are no invisible objects, as that *the things which are seen*, are comparatively no other than mere shadows and illusions of our senses. Moreover, if the senses delight in or abhor any thing corporeal; the soul should likewise much rather love or hate the same in spirituals. Does a beautiful form please the eye? how much more amiable is a soul that is lovely? Is a deformed visage loath-

loathsome? what then must a mind be that is disfigured and distorted with vice? And thus you may carry on the comparison throughout; for the Soul has its comeliness and ugliness, as well as the Body; by which it is sometimes the beloved of God, and sometimes the minion of the Devil, from the same principle in both, of admiring one's own likeness. It is likewise subject to youth and age, sickness and health, life and death, poverty and wealth, pain and pleasure, peace and war, heat and cold, hunger and thirst, meat and drink; and in a word, whatever perceptions the Body feels, must be understood to be applicable to the Soul also. Now the spiritual life consists principally in a constant endeavour to take off our attention from things that have no real existence, but partly appear what they are not; of which kind are sinful pleasures and worldly honours; partly are mouldring away, and dropping insensibly into nothing; and instead thereof, to place our affections on eternal, unchangeable, and perfect enjoyments. Of this *Socrates* himself was aware; that Philosopher, not only in

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in word, but in deed: for he says, "that a soul cannot depart happily out of the body, except it has first by means of philosophy deeply meditated on Death; and by a contempt of corporeal sensations, and a love and attention to spiritual objects, used itself long since to be absent as it were from the body." This is that Cross, which Christ proposed to his disciples, and that Death, which St Paul declares *we must die together with our Lord*; and is spoken of by the Prophet, saying, *For thy sake are we killed all the day long, and are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.* Again, *Set your affections on things above, and not on the things beneath.* All which sayings tend to no other purpose, than to shew, that we ought to become as it were callous and insensible to corporeal objects; that we may be so much the more acute in the discernment of spiritual, in proportion as we are dull and stupid in our judgements of earthly matters. The more we neglect the things without, the more shall we live unto ourselves within. In short, to speak plainly, the less value we set upon temporal,

ral, the more we shall value eternal enjoyments: as, the less we are moved by false and precarious joys, the higher esteem we shall set on those that are true. Let me advise you therefore to have this Rule constantly at hand, that you may not think of resting in things transitory, but upon comparison may rise a step higher to the love of spiritual substances, that you may learn hereby to despise what is visible, when compared with what is invisible. Thus, a bodily distemper will become more tolerable, when you consider it as a remedy and cure of the mind. You will not be so solicitous for the health of the body, when your whole attention is turned to preserving the health of your mind. Are you afraid of the Death of the Body, consider that of the Soul is much more terrible? You abhor Poison, as it destroys the one; but are in no fear of that which will make the other to perish. Now Hemlock is not a more deadly Poison to the Body, than Pleasure is the Bane of the Soul. Again, you tremble and look pale through fear when the sky lightens; but
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how much more dreadful are the flashes of divine Vengeance? And yet you are not afraid of that horrible sentence, *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire.* — You are ravished and delighted at the sight of a Beauty; but why do you not rather admire the beauties of the mind? Set your affections then on beauty of a heavenly unchangeable nature, and you will not be so fond of the fleeting transient charms of the Body. You pray God, that he would be pleased to send rain upon the earth, that so your estate may not be burned up; how much rather ought you to pray, that God would send the dew of his blessing upon your heart, that you be not barren and unfruitful in good works? With what care do you endeavour to make up the loss of a little money; and with how much more ought you to prevent any loss or detriment happening to the mind? you lay up a provision against old age for the body; ought you not in like manner to consult for the good of the soul? Thus ought you to moralize on things that daily present themselves to your senses, and

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which, according to their different impressions, affect us diversly with Hope and Fear, Love and Hatred, Pain and Pleasure *.

WHOSOEVER observes, will find that the one thing inculcated by the chief of the Prophets, *Isaiab*, and the chief of the Apostles, *Paul*, in all his Epistles, is this; That we ought to place no confidence in the Flesh: but that in the Spirit are to be found Life, Liberty, Light, Adoption, and all those desirable Fruits, which he sometimes enumerates. And on the contrary, he every where despises, condemns, and argues against the Flesh. And if you take notice, you will see our Master Jesus Christ often pursuing the same topic, in his several Discourses, particularly in those where he speaks of drawing the ass out of the well on the Sabbath day; of giving

* The Translator has omitted a long passage here, that is in the Original, which he supposed would be rather prejudicial than useful to the Persons for whom this Translation was intended; namely, the plain, well-meaning, and illiterate Readers.

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sight to the blind; of rubbing out the ears of corn; of eating with unwashen hands; of feasting with sinners; of the Pharisee and the Publican; of fasts; of our brethren after the flesh; of the *Jewish* boast, that they were the Sons of *Abraham*; of offering gifts; of prayers; and of the broad hems of their garments: — In all which, and other the like passages, he disapproves of the Carnal Law, and censures their Superstition, that preferred the being *Jews* outwardly, to being *Jews* inwardly, and in the Spirit. So likewise he signified to the woman of *Samaria* in these words, *Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth.* John iv. The difference between the *Letter* and the *Spirit*, he shewed in Fact, when at the marriage-feast he turned the water, which being both

cold and insipid, denotes the Letter, into wine; an emblem of the Spirit, that warms the spiritual Man into a contempt of this present life. And that you may not think much of Christ's condemning the things before mentioned, he even condemned the eating his own Flesh, and drinking his own Blood, except they be ate and drank by Believers in a spiritual manner. For to whom think you did he speak those words, *It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the Flesh profiteth nothing?* not surely to the men, that by hanging a Bible or a brazen Cross round their necks, think themselves secure from all evil, and place the perfection of Devotion therein; but unto those, whom he had initiated into the mystery of receiving his Body. If a matter of that weight be nothing, yea even pernicious, without it be received spiritually; how much less can we confide in other carnal Ordinances? Possibly you may communicate every day; but if, notwithstanding, you live only for your own sake, and have not the least sense of another's afflictions, your receiving the Sacrament is a mere

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mere carnal act. But if in taking the Sacrament you endeavour to be, what that holy rite signifieth, namely, one Spirit and one Body with Christ, you then become a lively member of his church. That is to say, if you love nothing but for Christ's sake, if you admit that your goods are common to all his poor members, and are equally sorry for other mens crosses as your own, then indeed you receive the Sacrament spiritually, and to your Soul's infinite benefit. If you perceive that you are transformed into Christ, and live every day less and less unto yourself; then may you return your hearty thanks unto that Spirit who alone quickneth. Many are apt to reckon up how often in a day they have attended divine service; and then, as if they owed Christ no further duty, away they go from church, and return to their ordinary way of life. It is a step indeed to put on a form of godliness, but if men go no further, I cannot but blame them. Do but perform what is there preached, and it will be well.—Is the death of our Lord and Master set forth in lively colours,
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then examine yourself thoroughly and see how little you want of being dead to the world? But if your mind is still imbittered with anger, ambition, covetousness, envy, and sensual pleasure, though you draw near to the church, you are still far off from GOD. Christ was slain for you, sacrifice therefore your lusts unto him: devote yourself unto him wholly, who for your sake offered himself up to the Father. But if you trust in him, without thinking on these things to do them, know that GOD verily hates your stupid and carnal devotion.

You have been baptized you say into Christ, yet I would not have you immediately fancy yourself a Christian; for if your mind is wholly set on this world, you are a Christian therefore in appearance, but in truth worse than a heathen. If you demand why so? the reason is plain, because you have observed only the outward form of this Sacrament, but have neglected the spirit and intention of it.—You have washed your Body indeed, but your Soul is still vile and polluted. On the contrary, if
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you are buried together with Christ in Baptism, and intend to walk with him in newness of life, I confess then you are a true Christian.

THE *Romanists* use to sprinkle themselves with holy water; but it would be much more for their benefit, if they did cleanse their minds from all impurities. They worship the Saints, and honour their Relicks; but despise their good examples, which is the best Relick they left behind them. The greatest honour any one can pay to the Virgin *Mary*, is to put on her Humility; as the most acceptable and fittest respect that can be paid to the Saints is, to imitate their Virtues. Would you obtain the favour of *Peter* or *Paul*? that you may do, by following the one's Faith, and the other's Charity; much sooner than by going ten pilgrimages to *Rome*. Would you do *Francis* the highest honour? — the way is, if you are proud, covetous, or contentious, to sacrifice all these to the Saint. — Subdue anger, and grow more humble, after the pattern of *Francis*; despise filthy lucre, and grasp the wealth of
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the Soul : lay aside contention, and *overcome evil with good* ; and the Saint will take that kinder, than if you lighted up above a hundred tapers before him. Some think it a great thing, to be buried in a Cloak of *St Francis* : but what will the likeness of the Cloak signify to them when they are dead, if their manners were the reverse of the Saint's whilst they lived ? Christ indeed is the great pattern of all goodness to Believers ; yet are *they* vainly fond of worshipping him by his Saints : if then they will persist in such an erroneous worship, let them however honour Christ by imitating the examples of holy men, and, like them, depart from every vice, and embrace every virtue. If they will do this, the external reverence is needless. And where is the consistency in kneeling before the ashes of *St Paul*, that are extinct and speechless ; but at the same time neglecting the lively image, that still breathes as it were and speaks in his Epistles ? How preposterous is it, to adore the bones of *St Paul*, if any such there be remaining in the grave ; but not to regard that Spirit which
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still lives in his works? They foolishly admire a supposed fragment of his body, which they keep and see through a glass; but the perfect and entire Soul of *St Paul*, which is clearly seen in his writings, has no charms for them. Again, they worship those ashes, with which they work pretended Miracles on the bodies of men; but have no relish for those wholesome doctrines which would complete the cure of their Souls. Now Miracles are intended for the conversion of Infidels, for whose sake they were given; but Believers should read, and inwardly digest the books of *St Paul*; that they who confess that nothing is impossible unto God, may learn therein to love and adore him above all things.

THERE are some who honour Christ's image cut in Wood or Stone, or else drawn upon Canvass; but how much more should they honour the picture of his mind, which is so artificially drawn by the holy Spirit in the Gospels. Even *Apelles*, that great artist, could not more nicely touch the lineaments, nor describe with his pencil the shape of a man's body more accurately,

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than his mind discovers itself and is clearly seen through his discourse; especially in Christ, who was truth and sincerity itself, so that there could not be the least difference imaginable betwixt the original portrait of his mind, and the outward copy of his language. As there is nothing so like God the Father, as the Son, whose Word he is, sent from the divine Bosom; so nothing so nearly resembles Christ, as his own word, flowing from the inmost recesses of his heart. Can any one then be so stupid as not to admire and adore this truest image of Christ; but instead thereof endeavour to fix his eyes and his affections on a stock or a stone? When you have such holy, useful, and instructive remains of your Lord and Saviour; can you think of neglecting these, and applying to things of quite another nature? You look upon a coat or handkerchief that is said once to have been Christ's with astonishment, and can you then fall asleep in reading his sacred Oracles? You think it the greatest thing in the world, to have a scrap of the Cross in your possession; yet what is that to the having

having a competent knowledge of the mystery of the Cross, and being duly affected thereby? If such outward things as these make a man religious, what could be more so than the *Jews*, many of the worst of whom saw, heard, and touched Christ incarnate: and what could be more happy than *Judas Iscariot*, who saluted his very lips?

THE Flesh without the Spirit, profiteth so little, that even the Virgin Mother would have been in no better condition for having conceived and brought forth the Son of God, unless she had also been partaker of his Spirit. Great as this may seem, there remains something still greater. The Apostles enjoyed the personal acquaintance and company of our Saviour; yet you read how weak in Faith they were, and how dull of apprehension. What could any one desire more to secure his everlasting Salvation, than the constant conversation of one, who was both God and Man? Yet after seeing so many Miracles, and being taught for so many years the holy doctrine by the mouth of God himself,

and convinced by the mighty argument of his Resurrection; did he not, just before his Ascension, upbraid them with their unbelief? What could be the meaning of this? Doubtless they were staggered at his coming in the *flesh*, and therefore he said, *Except I go away, the Comforter will not come. It is expedient for you that I go.* The corporal presence of Christ is unnecessary to Salvation; dare we then to place the perfection of Piety in any thing *corporeal*? *Paul* had seen Christ in the flesh. Can any thing be greater think ye? Yet he despises this, saying, *Tbo' I have known Christ after the flesh, yet now know I him no longer.* And why so? because he had proceeded to the more excellent gifts of the Spirit. Perhaps I dwell too long on this particular, for one who is laying down Rules; but I am the more earnest, not without good reason, because I have found by experience that this one error is the great bane of Christianity, and is so much the more dangerous from its carrying some shew of Piety. For the most dangerous Vices are those, that come the nearest in
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appearance to Virtues. And not to mention that good men are the more likely to fall into them, they are not so easily corrected and amended; because the ignorant multitude believe that Religion is dishonoured, when such things as these are reproved. The world will immediately cry out, and certain noisy Preachers will rail against it, who, not out of regard to Christ, but to their own advantage, extol these things: whose gross superstition, and hypocritical pretences to Religion, oblige me frequently to declare, that I do by no means condemn outward ceremonies established by ecclesiastical Authority, nor the zeal of ignorant but sincere Christians, for they are sometimes marks, sometimes helps of genuine piety: which as they may be thought necessary to babes in Christ, until they grow unto perfect men, ought not to be despised even by these latter, for fear of giving scandal to weak brethren. What the former do, may be tolerated, provided their intention be good, and that they do not stop there, from whence they ought to set out in quest of matters more necessary

to Salvation. But to worship Christ by visible images, and for worldly purposes; and to lay so great a stress upon it, as if in these things consisted the whole of Religion; to plume ourselves upon them, and condemn others; nay, so to admire and adore them, as to be led away from Christ by those very means that should bring us to him; what is this but as it were to apostatize from the Gospel, which is of a spiritual nature; and to relapse into a kind of *Judaism*, which is not perhaps less dangerous, than it would be for one that is free from this superstition, to be subject to great and notorious vices. For if this be more sinful, that is more incurable.

St *Paul*, the great promoter of spiritual doctrine, how much does he every where press upon the *Jews* the vanity of outward works, and the necessity of being led by the Spirit? And yet the vulgar sort of Christians are relapsed into them again. But why do I say the vulgar? when even the Priests and learned men, nay, and the generality of those, who in name and shew profess to lead a spiritual life, are universally

fally led into the same error. *If the salt bath lost its savour*, how shall others be seasoned? I am ashamed to say how superstitiously some observe certain trifling ceremonies invented by ordinary men, tho' indeed with another design; with what rigorous malice they are required to be performed by every body; what confidence they place in them; how rashly they judge of those who observe them not; and with what strife they defend them. This truly is the merit by which they expect to gain Heaven, and they who have been used to such practises, consider themselves as so many *St Pauls* or *Antony's*. They begin with superciliously condemning and censuring other mens lives, and that by the methods usual with unskilful men, "who, as the Poet says, never think any thing done well, but what they do themselves." Yet when they have followed this their own institution even to the verge of old age, you may observe that they have no part of the true Christian in them, but are carnal, and subject to many gloomy kinds of vice, being morose in company, and scarce able

to bear themselves; their charity is exceeding cold, in proportion as their wrath is hot; they never forgive, but are virulent in their speeches; their hatred is eternal, and they will contend about nothing; in fine, they are so far from approaching the perfection that Christ requires, that they are not endued with the common virtues that the heathens were possessed of, whether by their natural reason, knowledge of the world, or the rules of their Philosophers: they being indocile, untractable, quarrelsome, lovers of pleasure, sick of the divine truths, agreeable to no men, suspicious of every body, and lovers of themselves. Are these at length the fruits of so many years studies, for a man to be the worst of his kind, but to fancy himself the best, to become a *Jew* and not a Christian, by being a slave to beggarly elements; and to prefer the outward honour given by men, to the secret approbation and praise of God. But if they pretend that they have walked in the Spirit, and not in the Flesh; where then are the fruits of the Spirit? where is their charity? where is that

that inward joy? where that peace with all men? where is patience, long-suffering, goodness, kindness, meekness, faith, modesty, temperance, chastity? where the image of Christ in their life and character? I am no Fornicator, you will reply, no Thief, nor guilty of Sacrilege, and observe the rules of my profession. But what else is this, than saying with the Pharisee, *I am not as other men are, Robbers, Adulterers, &c. I fast twice a day?* How much better is an humble Publican, imploring mercy, than this kind of righteous men, that justify themselves? And what is your profession? Is it, that you will not be a Christian, as you formerly vowed in Baptism, but a Jew? For such you certainly are, if for the sake of your vain traditions, you transgress the commandments of God. Is not a Christian life a spiritual one? Let us hear what St Paul says to the Romans, chap. viii. *There is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the spirit of life, in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin*

sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. For they that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit. For to be carnally minded, is death; but to be spiritually minded, is life and peace: because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh, cannot please God.

WHAT could be said more fully and expressly? Yet they say this has no relation to them; I mean, the men who are very ready to excuse their own faults, but very quick in condemning those of others. But when St Paul talks of walking after the flesh, they apply it to Whoremongers and Adulterers only: when of the carnal mind, that is enmity against God; that they pervert to mean what they call secular Learning.

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Learning. In both these respects, they applaud themselves, in that they are neither Adulterers, nor skilled in any kind of Learning. But *to live after the Spirit*, they take to signify nothing else but living as they do. Now if they had been as accurate in observing *St Paul's* stile, as they are bold in despising *Cicero's*, they would have understood, that by *the flesh*, the Apostle means *what is visible*; by *the spirit*, that which is *invisible*. And he every where inculcates, that visible things should be made subservient to invisible, and not on the contrary, the invisible stoop to the visible.

YET they are so absurd, as to make Christ minister unto those things, that ought to minister unto Christ. If you require a proof, that the word *flesh* is to be understood not only of Lust and Luxury, hear what the same Apostle says, writing thus to the *Colossians* upon the same point: *Let no man beguile you of your reward, in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of Angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his*

his fleshly mind: and not holding the head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministred, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.

Chap. ii. And to take away all manner of doubt, that he is speaking of some that relied upon outward ceremonies, and blamed others for their spiritual pursuits, observe what follows; *Wherefore, if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances?* Dissuading us from these, he says farther, Chap. iii. 20. *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.* Afterwards, in laying down the rules of a spiritual life, what does he prescribe? Is it, that we must perform such and such Rites? must be dress'd in this or that Garb? must eat only particular kinds of Meat; or repeat such a number of Psalms? Nothing like it. But he says, *Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection,*

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affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry, ver. 5. A little further he exhorts, But now you also put off all these, anger, wrath, malice : and at ver. 9. Put off the old man, with his deeds ; and put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him. What now is meant by the old man ; namely, the first man, which is of the earth, earthy, whose conversation is not in heaven, but on earth ? By earth, you are to understand whatsoever is visible, and of course temporary. And what is the new man ; to wit, the LORD from heaven ? Now heaven signifies every thing invisible, and therefore eternal. Lastly, that we might not think of pleasing GOD by certain external observances, as so many Charms, which is more like Jews than Christians ; he tells us, that our works are no otherwise acceptable to GOD, than as they spring from Charity : And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts ; to the which also ye are called in one body, ver. 14, 15.

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BUT to set this matter in a still clearer light: In his Epistle to the *Galatians* he makes frequent mention of *the Flesh*, and of *the Spirit*; and not only endeavours to turn them from obeying their Lusts unto Chastity, but also to recover them from *Judaism*, and trusting in the merit of Works, into which they had relapsed by hearkning to false Apostles. Observe now amongst the works of the Flesh, what a catalogue of Vices he has given us: *Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like.* And a little afterwards, *If we live in the spirit, let us also walk in the spirit,* Gal. v. 25. He then adds a caution against what seems to be the chief Adversary of the Spirit; *Let us not be desirous of vain-glory, provoking one another, envying one another.*

Now the tree is known by its fruits: What though you watch, and fast, and pray, and observe strict silence, with the like

like ordinances, I value them not; nor shall I believe that you are in the Spirit, except I behold in you the fruits of the Spirit. Why should I not pronounce that you are in the Flesh, if notwithstanding a whole age almost spent in those observances, you still discover the works of the Flesh? For what else can one call that more than feminine envy, that military fierceness and anger, that insatiable lust of quarrelling, that canine railing, that envenomed and malicious speaking, that pride, that obstinacy, that falshood, that vanity, that lying and flattery? You presume to judge your Brother in meat, drink, or in cloaths; but *St. Paul* condemneth you by your actions. Is this the difference betwixt you and the worldly minded, carnal man, that you are both guilty of the same vices; but that he is so in things of consequence, you in trifles? If so, which is worst, he who rages, hates and contends, because he has been deprived of his Estate, his Daughter ruined, his aged Parent injured, or he himself has been disappointed of an Office, or courted his

his Prince's favour in vain?—or you, who are much more bitter, although upon occasions not worth the speaking of? The greater cause there is for offending, so much the less, not greater, is the offence. It matters not what the motive is, so the disposition be the same: or if it does, it shews how much worse that man is, who is led away from Virtue for any the most trivial reason.

I SPEAK not at present of those Monks who are detested even by the world; but of such as the common people extol, and admire as Gods: who ought not to be offended at any thing in this discourse, as it censures not Persons, but Vices. And if they are good men, they will take a pleasure in such admonitions as tend to the welfare of their souls. Nor am I ignorant that many of them, by the force of Learning and Genius, have a taste for the spiritual Sense of Scripture. But it generally happens, as *Livy* hath observed, that the major part out-number the better sort.—And if we may venture to speak truth, the strictest Orders of every kind of Monks
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place the sum of Religion in Ceremonies, or a certain appointment of Psalms, or in Bodily Exercises : whom, if you examine and question about spiritual matters, you will find the greatest part of them merely carnal. And this is the reason that their minds are in such continual alarms, fearing where there is no fear, and resting securely in the midst of the most terrible dangers. Hence likewise that perpetual Infancy in Christ, which makes them lay the greatest stress upon things of no weight in themselves; and neglect others, which would be sufficient of themselves alone. Thus they are always, as it were, under tutorage, and a servile yoke; never aspiring to the spirit of Liberty, nor advancing to the heighths of Charity : contrary to St Paul's advice, who biddeth them, *Stand fast, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.* And in another place; *The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.* But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster; for ye are all the children of God, by faith in Christ

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Jesus. Gal. iii. In the next Chapter he writes thus: Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son. In the fifth Chapter he goes on: Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. Again, in his Epistle to the Romans: We have received the spirit of adoption of the sons of God, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. To the same purpose he writes to Timothy: Exercise thyself unto godliness; for bodily exercise profiteth little, but godliness is profitable unto all things. And

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to the *Corinthians*, *Now the Lord is that Spirit; but where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.*—But why do I quote these, and many more places of *St Paul* that might be mentioned, who seems to have had no other design in all his writings, but to make us despise the *Flesh*, which is the author of all contention; and to call us to the *Spirit*, which is the inspirer of liberty and charity. For these following are inseparable companions, the *Flesh*, *Anxiety*, *Servitude*, and *Contention*; and, on the other hand, so are the *Spirit*, *Peace*, *Love*, and *Liberty*; and this is the doctrine perpetually inculcated by the *Apostle*. Who then can give us more refined instructions in Religion, than he who speaks the sense of every other part of Scripture?

THIS is the first and great commandment of the Law, and this same is renewed and perfected in the Gospel; and Christ was born and died for this very purpose, that he might teach us to be no longer *Jews*, but to *love as brethren*. At his last supper, how carefully and affectionately does he prescribe to his Apostles, not con-

cerning Meats and Drinks, but that they might *love one another*? What else does *St John*, his beloved follower, inculcate, yea, and exhort to, but *mutual Love and Charity*? And *Paul*, who, as I said before, every where recommends Charity, does, in his Epistle to the *Corinthians*, prefer it even to *Miracles, Prophecy, and speaking with the tongues of Angels*. Don't pretend that it is Charity to be often at church, to adore the images of Saints, to light candles in honour of them, or to repeat a set number of prayers over and over again; for *God* has no need of such things. But, it is Charity in *St Paul's* sense, to edify our neighbour, to consider all men as members of the same body, to think that we are all one in *Christ Jesus*, to rejoice in the Lord as much on our brother's account as on our own, and to feel for him as well as for ourselves; to correct with mildness, to instruct the ignorant, to raise him that is fallen, to comfort the afflicted, to relieve the sick, and do good to the poor; in short, to lay out all our wealth, our care and endeavours, that we may benefit as many as possible for
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Christ's sake: that as he was born, lived, and died, not for his own advantage, but for ours; even so we should follow his example, and do good to the brethren rather than to ourselves.

If this commonly were the case, nothing could be more easy and delightful than the life of men retired from the world: On the contrary, we find by experience, that it is melancholy and painful; for the most part overrun with *Jewish* superstition, and no better, but in some respects worse, than the life and conversation of the men of the world. This species of men that I am now speaking of, would not so much as be owned by *Augustin*, were he to rise again, notwithstanding he is the boasted founder of most of their Orders; nay, he would even disapprove of this way of life, and say, That he did not appoint them to live like superstitious *Jews*, but by the rule and practice of the Apostles. I know very well what some of the wiser sort will say, in answer to what has been just observed, namely, that we ought to be careful of offending, even in the least matters, lest we fall gradually

dually into more heinous crimes. Though this answer be just, yet ought we not likewise to be still more careful, how we content ourselves with mere trifling observations, lest, by that means, we might fall short of matters of the most weight and consequence? The danger is more apparent in one case, but, notwithstanding, it is greater in the other; and we should therefore try to steer a middle course between the two extremes. It may be of use, I confess, to practice those things, but, by no means, to lay the whole stress upon them. Thus *St Paul* does not forbid the application of the outward elements, only he would not have a Christian that is free, become a slave to those things he ought to be above. He condemneth not the Law of ordinances, provided one knows how to use them lawfully. You may possibly be pious without their help, but they are not the things that will of themselves make you so; they may contribute to a godly life, if you practise them with that design; but if you acquiesce in them alone, they will subvert your piety.

THE Apostle set no price whatever on the works of *Abraham*, though they were very great we all know; and can you for shame, value yourself on yours? GOD likewise despised the Burnt Offerings, New Moons, and Sabbaths of his people, tho' he himself had commanded them; and will any man dare to compare his paltry institutions with the divine precepts? Yet you read in *Isaiab* what contempt and loathing he expresses concerning them, Chap. i. 11. *To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me, saith the Lord? I am full of the burnt offerings of Rams, and the fat of fed beasts, and I delight not in the blood of Bullocks, or of Lambs, or of He-Goats.—— When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations, incense is an abomination unto me. The New Moons and Sabbaths, the calling of Assemblies, I cannot away with: It is iniquity, even the solemn Meeting. Your New Moons, and your appointed Feasts, my soul hateth; they are a trouble unto me, I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide*

hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. When he speaks of rites and ceremonies, and the multitude of prayers, does he not, as it were, point with the finger at those men, who measure Religion by the quantity of psalms or prayers they repeat? Observe also, how eloquently the Prophet heightens the aversion and loathing ascribed in a figure to God, insomuch, that he cannot endure to see or hear,—of what?—even those very things which he himself had ordained so religiously to be observed, and which had been for so many ages observed by anointed Kings and Prophets with the profoundest respect and veneration. Yet these he abhorred, even under the carnal Law; how then can any one trust to petty observances of his own invention, under a spiritual dispensation? In another place, God commands the same Prophet to *cry aloud, and spare not, to lift up his voice like a trumpet*; as if it was a thing of mighty consequence, and that required the severest reproof, and the greatest earnestness to dissuade them from. *They seek*

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seek me, says he, daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God.— They ask of me the ordinances of justice: They take delight in approaching to God: Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? Wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast you find pleasure, and exact all your labours. Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness. Ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high. Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head as a bulrush? and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord? Is. Chap. lviii. What shall we say to this? Doth God condemn what he before commanded? No, by no means.—How then? Why, he detests their abiding by the letter of the Law, and placing their confidence in so indifferent a thing. Moreover, he declares in both places, what further he requires of them. Thus, Chap. i. he says,

Wash ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes. By this does he not plainly give the preference to the *spiritual* and *inner man*? For the eyes of the Lord see what is done in secret, as well as openly; and he judgeth, not as men by the outward senses, but by the inward workings and motions of the heart.

He regardeth not the foolish virgins, that are all glorious without, but vain and empty within; neither knoweth them that approach him with their lips only, saying, *Lord, Lord.* Then, in the place before mentioned, he instructeth us, that the spiritual life consists not in Rites and Ceremonies, but in *Love of our Neighbour.* *Seek judgement, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.* In like manner, he subjoins in the other place, *Is not this the fast that I have chosen, to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thine house, when thou*

sayest of them, Thus I have kept the fast.

W. B.

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*seest the naked, to cover him, and that thou
hide not thyself from thy own flesh?*

WHAT then shall a Christian do? Shall he despise the commands of the Church? Shall he neglect the traditions of the Elders? Shall he condemn their pious institutions? By no means. On the contrary, if he be weak, he will keep them as necessary things; and if he be strong and perfect, he will observe them the rather, that he may prevent his offending a weak brother by his knowledge, and saving a soul for which Christ died. These things ought not to be left undone, but those must be done at our peril. I do not therefore condemn bodily worship, but I prefer spiritual. Visible acts of the body may not be improper, but it is *the invisible* act of the mind with which God is well pleased. He is a Spirit, and requires spiritual offerings. It is a shame for Christians to be ignorant of what a Heathen Poet hath observed, speaking of this matter;

*Si Deus est animus, nobis ut carmina dicunt,
Hic tibi precipue sit parâ mente colendus.*

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“ Since GOD is a pure, intelligent Being,
 “ he ought therefore to be principally wor-
 “ shipped by purity of mind.”

LET us not despise even a minute Hea-
 then Poet ; especially as his sentiment is
 worthy of the greatest Divine ; and as I
 have found, very little understood by any,
 though read by all.—The meaning of it is
 this : “ Every thing affects its own likeness.”
 You think perhaps that GOD is greatly
 moved with the sacrifice of a Bull, or the
 smoak of Incense, as though he was cor-
 poreal ; whereas he is a Spirit, the most
 pure and uncompounded that can be ; and
 therefore ought to be worshipped with a
 mind pure and unspotted. Again, you call
 a lighted Taper a sacrifice ; but the sacri-
 fice of GOD, according to *David*, is a
troubled spirit. And though he hath de-
 spised the blood of Bulls and of Goats, yet
 he will never despise *a broken and a contrite*
heart. If then you perform that which is
 religious in the sight of men ; the least
 you can do, is to offer up to GOD a rea-
 sonable sacrifice, which is the thing that he
 requires. You have put on it is true the
 garb

garb of sanctity and devotion; but what is this to the purpose, if your mind be disfigured with the filth of uncleanness and covetousness? If you cloath your outward man with white garments; let your inner man be adorned with the robes of righteousness, as white as snow. Do you keep strictly an outward silence? take care then that your mind be all peace and quietness within. You bend the knee often you'll say in the Church; yet all this is nothing, if in the temple of your heart you are stubborn and refractory against the Lord. Do you adore and prostrate your body before a wooden Cross? it is far better to reverence and adore the hidden mystery of the Cross. If you keep fast, and abstain from such meats, as nevertheless do not defile the man; why cannot you contain from obscene discourses, by which your own conscience and other mens are defiled? You reduce indeed, by this means, your Body; but your Soul in the mean time feeds on husks with swine.

You adorn a temple built of stone, and dedicate houses to religious uses; but are

negligent all the while of your mind, that temple which is defiled with all the abominations of the *Egyptians*. You rest from your bodily labours on the Sabbath day; but within, your bosom is all tumultuous and uneasy. You do not commit adultery; but then you are guilty of covetousness, that great pollution of the mind. You sing indeed with your voice devoutly, but what does your conscience whisper inwardly? *viz.* that you bless with your tongue, but curse in your heart. Your body is contained within the narrow compass of an humble cell; but your imagination roves all the world over. You do hear the word of GOD with your outward ears; but it would be better to hear and digest it inwardly. For the Prophet saith, *Except you hear and understand, your soul shall be grieved.* And you read in the Gospel how *that seeing, they see not; and hearing, they hear not.* Again, the Prophet saith, *Ye shall hear with the ear, and shall not perceive.* Happy then are they that hear the word of GOD inwardly. And blessed are they to whom the Lord spake
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the word from within, for their Souls shall be saved. Thus *David* saith, *Hearken, O daughter, and incline thine ear*; he speaketh there of the King's daughter that is all glorious within.—In short, what signifies forbearing those evil overt *acts*, that you inwardly affect; or doing that good outwardly, which you are averse to inwardly in your minds? Why do you go a pilgrimage to *Jerusalem*; when all *Egypt*, *Babylon*, and *Sodom*, dwell in you? To tread in Christ's steps with your feet is nothing; but to follow his example in likeness of affection, that is the grand point. If then there be any thing in having visited and touched Christ's sepulchre; is there not much more in a resemblance of his Death and Burial? You who confess your sins to a man, ought you not to be rather careful after what manner you confess them before God; for confession to him implies a thorough hatred of sin? You may think perhaps that your crimes will be blotted out for ever by a small present, a short pilgrimage, or by offering a few waxen images; but you are utterly mistaken. For as your

wound is inward, so must your medicine be likewise. Your inclinations are perverted,—you have loved what ought to have been your aversion, and hated what deserved your affection: you have taken bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter. In this case it signifies nothing what outward pretences you make, unless you are changed inwardly; and begin to hate and abhor what you loved before, and relish what then seemed insipid and loathsome. This indeed would be a good argument of your recovery.

Mary Magdalen loved much, and therefore many sins were forgiven her. Now the more you love Christ, the more will your faults displease you; for a hatred of vice as naturally follows the love of goodness, as the shadow is inseparable from the body. It were better you sincerely hated and forsook your sins once for all; than to have confessed them ten times over to a Priest, and still to continue therein.

In a word, we shall find that it is not only in the examples we have here produced, but throughout every part of this
visible

visible world; both in the old and new Law, in the commands of the Church, in a man's own self, and in all human affairs, there are two distinct parts, the Flesh without, and the Spirit within. In all which we must observe the due order, not relying much on the things that are seen, any further than they lead to what is much preferable; but always looking forward to the gifts of the spirit and charity: by which means we shall not be, as they are, gloomy and dispirited, always children (as the Proverb saith) and carnal, *mere bones without marrow*, (as the Prophet expresseth himself) lethargic, stupid, contentious, envious, whisperers: but mighty thro' Christ, rooted and grounded in charity, equal in all states and conditions, regardless of small matters, ambitious of the highest, always joyful, and fruitful in knowledge; which they who reject, will themselves be rejected by an all-knowing God. For it is mere ignorance, accompanied with an unteachable disposition, and prompted by that Self-love which the *Greeks* call *φιλαυλία*, that induces men to trust in petty observances,

vances, and to talk arrogantly, that they conceive trouble, as *Isaiab* saith, and bring forth iniquity; that they are superstitiously and meanly bigoted to *Jewish* ceremonies. *St Paul*, speaking of them, says, *I bear them witness, that they have a zeal towards God, but not according to knowledge.* And what was it that they were ignorant of? namely, that *Christ* was the end of the Law, and that he is the spirit of Love. But *Isaiab* more expressly sets forth their wretched and forlorn state of bondage in the flesh. *Therefore*, says he, *my people were carried away captive, because they had no knowledge. And their nobles perished with hunger, and their multitudes were scorched up with thirst.* It is no wonder indeed that the illiterate many, who have no knowledge of their own, should be in subjection to carnal ordinances. But it is astonishing that the Prelates, and Peers as it were of the Christian Religion, should die thus of hunger and thirst. And what is the reason that they perish with hunger? because they are not able to break the bread reached out unto them by *Christ*; but content

tent themselves with feeding on the bran, without chewing and digesting the meal. And why do they languish with thirst? but because they cannot like *Moses* strike water out of the spiritual Rock; nor drink of the river of pure waters that flow out of the belly of Christ. Now this is to be taken not in a carnal but spiritual sense.

THEREFORE, brethren, that we may no longer weary ourselves with grievous and fruitless pains, but that by moderate exercise we may soon become strong men in Christ: let us, in obedience to this Rule, not creep like vile insects upon earth; but raising ourselves often upon those wings which grow again in our minds, pushed out, as *Plato* observes, by the genial warmth of Love, soar from Body to Spirit, from the visible World to the invisible, from the Letter to the Sense and Meaning, from sensible Objects to intelligible, from compounded to pure and simple: mounting thus step by step, as it were by *Jacob's* Ladder, from earth to heaven. He who after this manner daily approacheth to God, will find God also daily approaching

proaching unto him. And if we strive mightily to escape out of our present darkness, shutting our ears against the din of Sense; he will meet us graciously, coming out of his inaccessible Light, and unspeakable Silence; where not only the uproar of the senses will be composed, but even intelligible ideas and images shall all cease from their confusion.



R U L E VI.

*That Christ is the only pattern of Christians;
and of vulgar errors in morality.*

SINCE one thing naturally begets another in this extempore kind of writing, I shall here subjoin a sixth Rule; which has indeed some relation to the foregoing, but is regarded by few only, tho' it be necessary to the Salvation of all men. The Rule is, That he who aspires to Christian Perfection, should be as unlike the multitude as possible in their opinions and actions;

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actions; and consider Christ alone as the exact Pattern of Holiness. For he is the only true model, from which the least departure is wrong, and like a false bias will lead you out of your way. Now if *Plato* with his usual wisdom pronounced, that a man could never be constant in the practise of virtue, that had no settled notions of what is right and wrong; how much more pernicious must it necessarily be, to entertain false opinions in matters that concern our Salvation, and to have them thoroughly rooted and established in our minds? He therefore thought it of the utmost consequence, that they whose uprightness entitles them to the rank of Governors, should lay down to themselves fixed opinions concerning the things to be pursued or declined, and engrave them on their hearts as unalterable and inviolate Laws. For whatever any one is thoroughly convinced of in his mind, that he will naturally express in his outward demeanor. Christians therefore should make it their chief care, to inspire their children with sentiments worthy of Christ, even from their cradle, whilst

whilst in the arms of their nurses, amid the fond caresses of their parents, and as soon as they are taught to say the alphabet, because nothing (as *Fabius* says) makes so strong an impression, or is with so much difficulty effaced, as the images stamped on tender minds. Far, very far from infant ears be removed those obscene Ballads, which Christians at home, abroad, and every where sing, though too bad for common Heathens to admit of hearing. Neither let them see their Mother crying for the loss of her Child, or lamenting as if she was undone for a Sister's death. Let them not hear their Father too calling another coward for not revenging an affront; or extolling the man that has raised an immense fortune, though by means the most execrable. For the corrupt nature of man takes instant pattern from vice, as gun-powder fires at the least spark.

Though this is a foundation best laid in childhood; yet in every age likewise it is our business to root out evil opinions, and in their place to substitute such salutary principles, as when they have gathered strength,

strength, can never be shaken. He who does this, will naturally cleave to virtue; and will pity, instead of following after those that forsake her. To this head belongs that saying of *Socrates*, which is far from being absurd, though reproved by *Aristotle*; namely, "That Virtue is nothing else but the knowledge of what ought to be chose and refused:" not that he did not see the difference betwixt the knowledge of Virtue, and the love of it. But as *Demosthenes* replied, "that Pronunciation was the first, second, and third thing in eloquence," to one that asked him what it was: thereby shewing that it was so principal a part, that he esteemed it as it were the whole; — in like manner *Socrates* disputing with *Protagoras*, clearly proves, that in every kind of virtue, knowledge is so material a thing, that indeed vice proceeds from no other cause, than from false and absurd opinions. Thus for instance, they who love Christ, and they who love pleasure, money, or vain-glory, both alike pursue what seems fair and pleasant. But the latter are in an error, taking bitter for sweet,

Sweet, and sweet for bitter, that which is
 loss for gain, and gain for loss; esteeming
 that honourable, which is shameful; and
 that shame, which is real honour. But
 whosoever is thoroughly perswaded, and his
 Soul is as it were nourished and supported
 by the belief, that virtue alone is best, fit-
 test, sweetest, most honourable, and most
 beautiful;—and on the other hand, that
 vice is the only evil, naturally base, ugly,
 scandalous, pernicious, and its own tor-
 mentor; and all this not from common
 estimation, but by weighing the nature of
 things, he cannot continue in that opinion,
 and in vicious habits long together. For
 the vulgar have been long since held to be
 bad models both of living and thinking;
 and human affairs have never been so well
 conducted yet, but that the *many* have al-
 ways been on the *worst* side. Think not
 with yourself in this manner, *I do but as*
other men do, or as my father did before me:
 such a Philosopher or Divine are of that
 opinion:—And thus the Nobility live:—
 Yea, the King himself sets the example;
 —nay, and the Bishops and high Priests
 do

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do the same;—and surely these are not the vulgar. But be not moved by great names; for by the vulgar I do not point out mens state and condition in life, but their hearts. They are the vulgar, whatever their station is, who being chained down in *Plato's* cave by their lusts and affections, adore shadows for substances. Would it not be absurd in any one, to fit the rule to the stone, instead of squaring the stone by the rule? It would be much more preposterous to try to reconcile Christ to mens manners; rather than to bring the latter in obedience to the former. You are not therefore to think a thing is right, because it is done by the great, or by the generality; unless it be also conformable to the will of Christ. So far is common practice from being a rule of action, that on the contrary, it is of itself a reasonable ground of suspicion. It is and ever will be a very *small* flock, that can take delight in Christian poverty, truth, and sincerity. A small I say, but a blessed congregation; for they alone are entitled to the kingdom of heaven. The path of virtue is narrow, and trodden but by few;

and yet there is no other that leadeth unto life. Does a good Architect borrow his plan from the most noted, or from the *best* model of building? A Painter likewise, does he not copy after the finest portrait? Christ, in like manner, is our great pattern and example, who alone points out to us the certain way to happiness; and him we may imitate without reserve or danger. But as for all others, whether good or great, they are no further to be followed, than they themselves follow Christ. The generality of Christians you are to look upon as worse judges of common morals than even Heathens. What their belief is, let them look to. But it is past all doubt, that Faith without the good works which it ought to produce, is so far from being meritorious, that it will encrease their damnation. Compare the manners of the present times with what we read in the annals of past ages; and tell me when ever was honesty thought so contemptible; and wealth, however gotten, so much honoured and respected? When were those lines of

Horace

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Horace ever more fully verified than in these our days?

For mark th' advantage ; just so many score
Will gain a Wife with half as many more;
Procure her Beauty, make that Beauty chaste,
And then such friends—as cannot fail to last,

And again,

A man of Wealth is dubb'd a man of Worth,
Venus shall give him Form, and *Anfis* Birth.

Who is there now, but what understands
that seriously, which was meant by the
Satyrist ironically :

There *London's* voice : get money, money still !
And then let Virtue follow—if she will.

POPE.

WHEN did such abandoned luxury ever
before prevail ? When were Whoredom
and Adultery so commonly practised, so
little punished or disgraced ? Whilst
Princes connive at those faults in others,
which they are guilty of themselves ; and
every one thinks he may safely do, what
the court daily practises. Who does not
think Poverty to be the greatest evil and

disgrace that can befall him? Heretofore it was usual, even in their ordinary plays and entertainments, to throw out bitter taunts against whoremasters, covetous persons, boasters, and lovers of money; and in their public shews, a good jest upon any of these vices was well received by the populace among the Heathens, which are now in great vogue with the Christian Nobility, who are even flattered upon those accounts. The *Athenian* Theatres, in like manner, would not endure to hear a miser, in one of *Euripides* his plays, preferring Money to every other earthly convenience; nay, they had certainly drove the Actor off the stage, play and all; if the Poet had not immediately stood up, and desired them to have patience a while, till they saw to what a tragical end the miser would certainly come at the last.

How many illustrious examples could I produce of men amongst them, who, after they had governed the commonwealth gloriously, retired to the management of their domestic affairs, carrying nothing back with them to their poor families, but the honour

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of having governed well: — Of men, who valued integrity beyond money, and esteemed chastity better than life;—who were never elated by prosperity, nor depressed by adversity,—who preferred honour and danger to pleasures,—and, content with the conscioufness of doing what was right, despised titles, and riches, and the other advantages of fortune. To pass by the virtue of *Phocion*; *Fabrizius* his choice of poverty before wealth; the magnanimity of *Camillus*, the severity of *Brutus*, the chastity of *Pythagoras*, the great temperance of *Socrates*, *Cato's* uprightness, and a thousand instances more of the several heroic acts that are every where recorded in the *Lacedemonian*, *Persian*, *Atbenian*, and *Roman* histories, to our great shame;—and only mention *St. Aurelius Augustin*, who, as appears by his *Confessions*, long before he became a Christian, had despised money, disregarded honours, neglected glory, and was so temperate in his pleasures, that tho' he was a young man, he contented himself with but one woman, and lived with her too in a state of wedlock. Such glorious souls,

souls, and such brave examples, it will be difficult now to find, not only amongst Courtiers or Ecclesiastics, but even in the numerous societies of Monks. And if such an one there was, he would be laughed and pointed at, as an Ass among the Monks; nor would they allow him to be any thing better, than a doting, raving, melancholy, ignorant, hypocritical creature, not worthy the name of a man. Thus we Christians honour and obey the doctrine of Christ; so that it is generally looked upon, now a days, to be the most silly, mean, and scandalous thing in the world, to be a true and sincere Christian; as if Christ had come in vain, or that Christianity is now quite another thing to what it was, or that it did not appertain to all men alike. From such sentiments as these, you cannot depart too far, and your communion with Christ should be the standard and measure whereby to value every thing else.

Who is there now, generally speaking, but what regards Birth as one of the chief blessings of life? But be not surprised, when

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when you hear the wise men of this world, men of the highest rank and gravity, seriously deciding the different degrees of relation; knitting their brows with as much importance, as if the nation was at stake, and asserting trifles with the greatest vehemence; or when you see others so puffed up with the titles of their grandsires and great grandsires, as if they thought that the rest of mankind, in comparison with themselves, were hardly men. But laughing with *Democritus* at their folly, consider with yourself, (which is the truth of the matter) that the highest and only honour is to be *born again* in Christ, to be engrafted into his church, and to become one spirit and one body with G O D.

OTHERS perhaps, may be the sons of Kings; but be it your chief boast to be, and to be called *The son of God*. Let them plume themselves upon their dwelling in the courts of Princes; but be it your choice rather, as it was *David's*, to be a *door-keeper in the house of God*. Observe likewise, whom Christ chose, namely, those the world called *Ignoble, Weak, and Foolish*.

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Our extraction from *Adam* is mean, and in *Christ* there is no respect of persons: The only nobility is, to despise the vanity it naturally engenders; and true honour is, to become a sincere servant of *Jesus Christ*.—Those are a man's real ancestors, whose virtues he imitates. Hear what the Judge of true worth says in the Gospel against the *Jews*, who boasted of their descent from *Abraham*—a personage, not only of illustrious birth, great fortunes, and eminent for his victories over Kings; but much more for his favour with God, on account of his many virtues. And who would not esteem these things as marks of the highest grandeur and dignity? But what spake the Truth to the *Jews* on this head, viz. *Ye are of your Father the Devil, and the works of your Father ye do*. In like manner *St Paul*, weighing true honour by his Master's Scale, says, *For they of the circumcision are not all Israelites; neither are all the sons of Abraham, who are of the seed of Abraham*. The greatest baseness is, to be a slave to vice, and to have no affinity or resemblance of *Christ*, who acknowledges none for his brethren,

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brethren, but they *that do the will of his heavenly Father*. And his is the meanest birth, whose *Father is the Devil*, that is, he that doth *the works of the Devil*, if you will believe Christ, who is *truth, and cannot lie*. On the other hand, he is of the noblest blood, that is a son and heir of God, a brother and coheir of Christ. What *their* ensigns of dignity mean, let worldly men themselves examine; but the badges of Christianity, tho' common to all, are most conspicuous, that is to say, the cross, the crown of thorns, the nails, spear, and marks of the Lord, which St *Paul* glories to have carried about in his body. Thus you see what different notions you ought to form of true nobility from the vulgar.

AGAIN, if a man has hoarded up much treasure in his house, who almost is there that does not reckon him a very happy man? Yet, in true judgment, every one is sufficiently happy, that possesses Christ the only good, and hath purchased that rich jewel, a virtuous mind, though with the loss of body and all other goods. He, I say, who hath found the hidden treasures

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of

of wisdom, which is more precious than riches; and hath obtained of Christ, the giver thereof, gold that hath been tried and purified seven times in the fire. What then is to be accounted of the gold, gems, and estates, which the world so much admires? They are Riches, falsely so called, but indeed *thorns which spring up*, according to the Gospel Parable, *and choke the word of God*. They are no better than burthens, which hinder men from following their indigent leader Christ, through the narrow path; and will not admit them to pass thro' the humble gate of life, into the kingdom of heaven. Do not therefore fancy yourself to be one jot better, though you were as rich as *Crasus* or *Midas*; but consider that you are only so much more entangled and burthened than others. He who can bravely despise those things, is rich, and rich enough; nor is there any danger of *his* wanting, whom Christ hath promised to supply with necessaries; he cannot hunger, who hath a relish for the heavenly manna; nor can he want cloathing, who hath put on Christ. The greatest loss a
Christian

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Christian can sustain, is to multiply his sins, and withdraw from his obedience; as the highest advantage he can attain to, is by growth in virtue. He need not fear he shall suffer want, that possesseth *him*, who is the author and giver of all good things.

W H A T likewise is it that wretches call Pleasure? Namely, that which is just the reverse of what it is commonly called. But what is it then? Why it is the laughter of fools and madmen, it is a luscious poison, and a specious snare. The only true joys are those of an innocent mind; the best feast is the study of the holy Scriptures; the sweetest airs are Psalms, penned by the Holy Spirit; the most delightful company is the communion of Saints, and the most exquisite feeling, the perception of Truth. Do but purge away the film that obstructs your eyes, cleanse your ears, and prepare your palate, and then you will begin to acknowledge Christ, whom, when once you have well tasted of, though all the Epicures in the world should collect the most honied sweets that ever were brought together, for your entertainment, they would seem even

loathsome and nauseous, when compared with him alone. Every thing is not pleasant that appears so, to a person not in health. Should a patient in a fever take water for wine; men would not envy his happiness, but rather pity his distemper.

IN like manner, you are mistaken, if you do not think, that the tears of the pious are more refreshing to them than the mirth and pleasantry of the wicked; that the former delight as much in their Fasts, as the latter in their Pheasants and Ortolans, their Turbots and their Sturgeons; that the frugal meals of the one, spread only with Greens and Pulse, after the manner of *Pythagoras*, are a finer regale, than the costly surfeiting banquets of the other. In fine, the truest delight is, for the love of Christ, not to be cheated and ravished with false pleasures.

OBSERVE, in the next place, how the world abuses the words Love and Hatred. When a mad young fellow doats upon a girl, the vulgar call it Love, but it is indeed the veriest Hatred. Real Love consults another's benefit, though it may be to
one's

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one's own detriment; but what does such a one hanker after, but his *own* gratification? Therefore he loves not her, but himself; tho' in truth, he loves not even himself, for no one can love another, that does not first love himself; I mean properly: no one can hate another, without hating himself first:—But to love another as he ought, sometimes obliges a man to hate him as he ought; and to hate him in that manner is to love him.—He therefore, who for trifling an advantage of his own, as he thinks it, ensnares a girl by flattery and presents, that so he may rob her of all that she has valuable, namely, her integrity, modesty, honesty, virtue, and reputation: What think you, that he loves or hates her? In truth, nothing can exceed his hatred.

WHEN foolish parents indulge their childrens vices, how commonly is it said, that they are very fond of them? But indeed, how cruelly do they hate them, by endangering their souls, while *they* do but gratify their own inclinations? What else does our mortal enemy, the Devil himself

desire; but that we may sin here with impunity, that we may suffer for it hereafter eternally? A good prince, and a kind master are they called, who wink at or encourage some faults in men, that they may commit them with more boldness, as with more safety. Yet this is the very punishment that GOD threatens to inflict upon those, whom he deigns unworthy of his mercy. *I will not visit your daughters,* says he by the Prophet, *when they commit fornication, nor your daughters in law when they are guilty of adultery.* And David's promise was this, *I will visit their offences with a rod, and their sins with stripes; but my mercy will I not utterly remove from them.*—You see, how in Christ all things are become new, and the very names thereof changed: Thus he, who loves not himself as he ought, mortally hates himself; he that has false pity on himself, is unmercifully cruel to himself; to indulge one's self, is to neglect one's self; to mortify, is to indulge; and for a man to lay down his life in a good cause, is to save it. They take proper care of themselves, that deny the

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the desires of the flesh; they do good to a person, that are severe to his vices; and they who destroy the sinner, save the man. In short, he that defaces the work of man, renews the image and work of God.

TAKE another instance of vulgar error, drawn from the received opinions of Power and Weakness, Courage and Cowardice. For is it not usual to call him a powerful man, that can easily hurt any one he has a mind? But to do mischief is much such a kind of ability as is common to vermin, poisonous creatures, and even the Devil himself, whose delight it is. GOD alone is truly powerful, who could not afflict if he would, and would not if he could; it being his property always to do good. But how can a tyrant hurt his fellow-creature? by robbing him of his money, torturing his body, or taking away his life? This, to a good man, would be a blessing instead of a curse; but if he be supposed a bad man, the other indeed might be the instrument, but it is he himself that hath been the author of his misery; for no one can be hurt but by himself alone. Whoever intends to

prejudice another, does himself first the greatest prejudice. Dost thou lie in wait to spoil me of my property? Thou thyself hast the greater loss of the two, in that thou hast lost thy charity. Thou canst not wound me, without giving thyself a much deeper wound. Remember, if thou takest away my life, thou killest thy soul to all eternity. Now *St Paul*, who was very weak to do an injury, though very able to bear one, yet boasts, that he *could do all things through Christ*. On the contrary, he is commonly accounted a brave and spirited man, that is of a fierce and impatient temper, that grows angry at the least offence, and returns *railing for railing, evil for evil*. But he that puts up with, or dissembles an affront, is called a Coward and a Poltron, not fit to be conversed with. Now, what can be more directly opposite to true greatness of mind, than to be ruffled and discomposed by a paltry word; to be unable to laugh at another's folly, and to think it the part of a man to be superior in doing wrong? Yea, how much braver is it, to be above every injury, and with an exalted soul,

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soul, to *recompense evil with good*? I do not call him a great man, that rushes dauntless upon the enemy, is the first to scale a wall, and that adventures his life where the greatest danger lies; for this may be expected of almost every common Gladiator. But he that can conquer himself, can heartily wish well to his ill wishers; can oblige those that have done him a mischief, can pray for them that execrate and abhor him; he alone deserves the name of a great and magnanimous hero.

LET us next examine what the world calls Honour, Disgrace, and Modesty.— You are commended perhaps for a certain action, but by whom? If by vain persons, and for an act of shame, this is so far from being honourable, that it is the greatest ignominy. Again, Are you mocked and condemned? To determine of this, we must know for what, and by whom. If for the sake of innocence, or other godly cause, and by wicked men; then it is not a reproach, but the greatest honour. For tho' the whole universe were to censure and cry out upon you, nevertheless what Christ commands,

commands, must be glorious. And tho' all mankind should applaud you, and ring your praises with acclamations; yet that must be always shameful, which God has forbidden.

It is commonly called Prudence, to endeavour to get money as fast as you can; to put it out safely, and to provide for the future. Thus you hear people every where gravely talking of one that has grown rich suddenly; "Oh, he is a notable, careful, " industrious man!" This is the cant of the world, that is *a liar, and the father of it*. But what says *the word of truth*? *Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee*. This man had stored his barns with full crops, and filled all his granaries with corn; had plenty of money by him, and thought of nothing but enjoying the fruits of his labours; but tho' he did not, like the generality of men, barely watch his treasure, (as the Poets feign the Dragon guarded the golden Fleece) without ever tasting of it, yet even this worldly wise man the Gospel calls *a Fool*. For what indeed can be more foolish and absurd, than like *Æsop's* dog,

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to catch at the shadow, and lose the substance. The fable indeed we can laugh at, tho' we see it every day exemplified in the lives and manners of Christians; but this is a circumstance fitter to call forth our tears, than provoke our laughter. He is but a novice in trade, that follows not the Comedian's advice, "To let slip a present advantage sometimes, in hopes of a better bargain hereafter,—or that insists upon a trifle in hand, though he is sure to be a loser by it in the end." How much more unwise is it, to be so very careful in providing for the necessities of this fleeting, precarious life, which God himself hath promised to supply; and, at the same time, to be negligent of our future existence, which we acknowledge must be for ever miserable, if we do not prepare ourselves for it beforehand.

To proceed to one mistake more.—
The man that listens after every idle report, and knows what is doing all the world over, is presently thought to have much knowledge and experience: as, if he can talk of losses by sea, of what is designed by the
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King of *Great Britain*, of the intrigues of the court of *France*, of news from *Rome*, or the manner of living in *Muscovy*, and of the politics of the *European* Princes; in short, he that has something to say to every man upon all occasions, is called wise.—Now what can be more thoughtless and absurd, than for any one to pry into what is doing abroad, and can be nothing to him; but never to think of what passes in his own breast, which is the only thing that belongs to him? Don't tell me of wars and tumults in *Corfica*, but reflect with yourself, whether you are not inwardly torn and distracted by anger, ambition, lust, and envy;—think how far you have got the better of them,—what hopes of victory,—how long before the battle will be decided,—what force you are provided with. If in these matters you shew great skill and vigilance, much address and circumspection, I will then pronounce you a prudent man. In this case indeed, we may retort upon the world its own reflection; “That he is a fool that is not wise unto himself.”

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IF you sit in this manner, all the joys and cares, hopes and fears, desires and sentiments of mankind, you will find them all alike perplexed with error, so that they *call good evil, and evil good; put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter; take light for darkness, and darkness for light.* Such is the far greater part of mankind, whom therefore you ought to contemn, lest you should grow like them; but pity at the same time, as wishing they might become like you; and, to use the words of St *Augustin*, “It becomes you to lament those you despise, and despise them whom you cannot but lament.” *Be not then conformed to this world in wickedness, but be transformed in the renewing of your mind; that you may approve of, not what men are transported with, but what the will of God, which is good and perfect, requires.* You are in very great danger of falling, when once you begin to observe what is done by the *many*, and to enquire, what are their opinions. You are a *child of light*, and of *eternal life*: *Suffer then the dead to bury their dead; and let the blind, with their blind leaders;*

leaders, *both fall into the ditch.* Be sure you do not let your heart be led away from Christ, who is the pattern for you to follow: There is no danger of going astray, when the clue of truth directs you; nor can you stumble in the dark, while the light shines upon you: If under this direction you shall learn to distinguish true from false, whether it be good or evil, you will rather abhor, than fall in with the blindness of the multitude, who being constantly bubbled with outward shews, and distracted with divers passions, of anger and envy, hope and fear, love and hatred, joy and grief, are more restless than the *the troubled sea, which casteth up mire and dirt.* In fine, the *Cynics, Stoics, and Brackmans,* hold fast to their first principles; and though the whole world should conspire to mock and explode them, yea, if all mankind united in one universal hiss against them, yet they would continue stedfast in the opinions they had once embraced: In like manner, O Christian, dare boldly to assert the tenets of your Religion; print them deep on your heart,

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heart, and have the fullest assurance of faith in your great master Jesus Christ.

Sentiments worthy of a Christian.

BE these Paradoxes of true Christianity ever ready in your mind; to wit, that a Christian is not born for himself, neither should desire to live unto himself: but whatever he is, or whatever he has, he ought to give God thanks for it; and to account that his goods are not his own, but are all of them common to all men. For Christian Charity admitteth no property. Good men he will love for their own sakes, and the bad for the sake of Christ; who so loved us his enemies beforehand, as to give himself up wholly for us; those he will embrace because they are good, and these no less in order to make them so. He will hate no man, but as a Physician does his Patient, being an enemy to vice, and to that only. Now the stronger the disease is, the greater pains true Charity will take. Is a man an Adulterer, an Infidel, or a Robber of Churches? he

he will detest the Adulterer, the Infidel, and the Sacrilegious; but not the man: he will endeavour to destroy the Sinner, which such a one made himself, but will save the man, that was made by God. He will wish well to all, pray for, and do good to all. He cannot hurt the guilty, but will be a sure benefactor to the innocent. He will rejoice at others success, and grieve at their disappointments, as though they were his own. And this is the Apostle's advice, *to rejoice with them that rejoice, and to mourn with them that mourn*: yea, he beareth another's affliction worse than his own; and rejoices more in a brother's prosperity, than in that wherein himself is affected. A Christian can never think in this manner; what have I to do with such a one? I know not whether he be good or bad; besides, he is a perfect stranger to me; and I was never obliged to him in the least; he once did me a diskindness, but never did me any service. These things should never enter at all into your head; but only remember what

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what Christ did for you, and how little you deserved at his hands ; and then repay his Love to you, as he requires, by doing good to your neighbour. Observe likewise, what distress he is in, and how much you are able to do for him. Consider also that ye are brethren in Christ, and co-heirs with the Lord ; that he is a member of the same body, a partaker of the common faith, that he is redeemed by the same blood, and called to the same state of grace, and kingdom of glory ; as the Apostle saith, *There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.* How can that man be a stranger to you, with whom you are connected by so many different ties ? Among the topics of the *Gentile* rhetoricians to persuade men into love or hatred, these were of some weight ; such a one is your fellow-citizen, kinsman, relation ; or the contrary : he is an acquaintance, your father's friend, a benefactor, grateful, well-born, rich ; or otherwise. In Christ either

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these things are nothing, or agreeably to St Paul, *they are all one and the same*. Let this, and only this present itself continually before your eyes; namely, he is my flesh, and my brother in the Lord. Does not whatever is imparted to any individual member, circulate through the whole body, and from thence reach the head? Now we all are members one of another, and it is the members joined together that constitute the body; Jesus Christ is the head of the body, and the head of Christ is God: whatsoever then is done to any one member of the body, whether it be good or ill, is done unto you, is done unto each respective member, is done unto Christ, and unto God; for all these, God, Christ, the Body, and the Members, are one. Amongst Christians such expressions as these are wrong, *Like to like*; and this other, *That unlikeness is the parent of hatred*: for of what use are words of distinction, where there is or ought to be the strictest union? It does not favour of true Christianity, what every day's experience confirms, that a Courtier is averse to a Citizen,

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zen, a Countryman to a Townsman, a Magistrate to a private person, a rich Man to a poor, a Nobleman to one of mean parentage, those in Power to them that are out, an *Italian* to a *German*, a *Frenchman* to an *Englishman*, a *South Briton*, to a *North Briton*, a Grammarian to a Divine, a Logician to a Grammarian, a Physician to a Lawyer, a Scholar to an illiterate Man, an Orator to a bad Speaker, a Batchelor to a Husband, a young Man to an old, a Clergyman to a Layman, a Priest to a Monk, a *Minorite* to a *Carmelite*, a *Carmelite* to a *Jacobite*; and, not to reckon up all the distinctions that there are in the world, even in trifles, the unlike hate each other. What becomes of that Charity, which extendeth itself even to enemies; when the change of a Name, or a different coloured Suit, when a Belt, or a Slipper a little diversified, and such like trumpery, the invention of men half crazed or half witted, shall make one man an enemy to another? But let us lay aside these childish distinctions, and use ourselves to consider that which is much more to the purpose, and

is inculcated every where by St Paul, *that we are all in Christ, members of one body, quickned by the same spirit, if we live unto him, neither envying the more honourable members, nor neglecting the inferior ; and let us be sensible, that we ourselves are the better for the good that we do our neighbour ; and when we injure our brother, we do ourselves the greatest injury. Let no man consult merely his private advantage, but let every one contribute all he can, in proportion as G O D has blessed him, to the common good ; that so every thing may flow back again to the fountain-head, from which it sprang originally. To this purpose St Paul writes to the Corinthians, to the Romans, and the Ephesians : see 1 Cor. xii. 12—28. Rom. xii. 4. For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office ; so we being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us. Eph. iv. 15. But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ. From whom the whole*

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whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love. And elsewhere he commandeth us, to bear one another's burthens, because we are members one of another.

Look then and see whether you think those people belong to this body, whom you hear every where talking after this manner; my Estate came to me by Inheritance, and I am a legal, not a fraudulent possessor; why then should I not make use of my own, or even abuse it, if I please? why should I give to them, that I owe nothing to? If I chuse to spend and throw it away, it is my own, and what has any body else to do with it? But consider, I beseech you, that while you are cramming down Partridges; one of your fellow-members is perishing for want: Whilst your full wardrobe is devoured with moths and worms; your naked brother stands shivering with cold: You are losing a thousand pounds a night at the gaming table; whilst
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some poor Girl, constrained by mere poverty, is prostituting her body; and by that means a soul is lost, for whom Christ died. You will say perhaps, What is this to me; I trouble myself with nobody's business but my own? And can you then, with such a disposition still think yourself a Christian; when you are not worthy to be called a Man?—In a numerous assembly when you hear such or such a one's character abused; you are contented to make no reply, or it may be are pleased with the detractor. I would have answered him, say you, if what he said, had concerned me; but I had no manner of acquaintance with the person so injured. Well then, if you have no connection with this particular member, you can have none with the body itself; and if none with the body, then you have no part in Christ the head of the body.

It is lawful, they say, to repel force by force. What the Laws of the country admit of concerns not me, but I wonder how the morals of Christians come to be influenced by such expressions as these; I did
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hurt him, it is true, but I was provoked to it: and again, I had rather do, than suffer wrong. For what if human Laws do not punish, but permit it; what think you Christ your King will do to you for the breach of his Law extant in *St Matthew: But I say unto you, resist not evil? &c.* Perhaps you will answer, that this was spoken only to the Apostles, and men that were perfect, but not unto you. But observe these words, *That ye may be the children of your Father*; if then you desire to be a child of God, the Law certainly relates to you. Again, if you give up all title to the reward, then only is the precept of no force to you; because it follows, *If you love them that love you, what reward have you?* as much as to say, none at all. For to do that, is no virtue; though not to do it, be a vice; for there can be nothing due to either, where both parties return like for like. Hear *St Paul*, the great Advocate for, and Commentator upon the Laws of Christianity: *Bless them that persecute you; bless and curse not; render to no man evil for evil; if it be possible, as much*

as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath. For it is written, *Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.* Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, give him meat; if he thirst, give him drink. For in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. But what, say you, if my forbearance should add to another's boldness, and by tamely enduring one *affront*, I bring on another? I answer, if you can avoid or ward the blow, without your returning it, no body hinders you from so doing; but if not, be sure you do not think it better to do harm to another, rather than suffer it yourself: if it is in your power, reform your enemy, either by loading him with kindness, or else softning him by a gentle behaviour; but if you cannot, it surely is better that one of you should perish, rather than both; and it is more for your advantage to grow rich in an increase of patience, than by retaliating evil for evil, to be both bad alike. Lay it down therefore for a rule of true

Christ.

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Christianity, to vie with all men in meekness, goodness, and liberality; but to fall very short of even the lowest persons in hatred, strife, mischief, pride, and scandal. But he is such a wretch, say you, that he does not deserve to be *forgiven*, much less rewarded. Be it so, yet surely this is doing a thing worthy of you, as well as of Christ, for whose sake you do it. But again, others say, I desire to do no body any harm, nor will I suffer them to do *me* any: whereas we should all strive heartily to forgive one another; and to take such care of our own conduct, as to give them no opportunity to forgive us. Be then as diligent to avoid giving offence, as ready to pardon it when given. And the higher you are, so much the more ought you to humble yourself; that you may do good to all in Charity. If you are of Noble birth; the modesty that Christ requires of you, will not disgrace, but well become your condition.

If you are a man of Learning, so much the more patiently ought you to endure and inform the Ignorance of others. Be-

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cause the more you have, the more you owe your brother. Are you rich? remember that you are not the Lord, but a Steward only of your Estate, and should therefore well weigh how you dispose of the public money. Some think that private property is forbidden, and poverty enjoined to Monks only; but they are mistaken, since they are in like manner commanded to all Christians. The Law punishes the man that robs another, yet it spares him that withholds his own from an indigent brother; but Christ punishes both alike. Are you a Magistrate? let not the honour of it make you haughtier, but the trouble it brings more vigilant. One says, I have no ecclesiastical Benefice; I am no Curate; nor Bishop: agreed: but are you therefore no Christian? consider well with yourself who it is you belong to, though you be no Ecclesiastic. Is Christ held in such contempt by the world, that they think it a great and mighty matter, to have no commerce with him; and that men are the more slighted, the stricter their union with him? Do not some of the angry
Laity

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Laity every day make use of the words Priest, Clergyman, and Parson, as terms of the greatest reproach? with as much warmth and rancour, as could be expressed against sacrilege and incest? I wonder indeed they do not speak against Baptism; and, with the *Saracens*, reflect upon us for bearing the odious name of Christians. If indeed they contented themselves with exposing a bad Priest, or a scandalous Clergyman, this were to be endured; for then they would censure the morals of the man, without seeming to despise his holy profession. But they who think it is an honour to them to commit rapes, to rob and plunder, to win or lose estates at hazard, and to be guilty of the like crimes; and have nothing more mean and scandalous to object to others, than the names of Priest or Parson; make it appear very plainly, what *their* opinions are of Christ, and what sort of Christians *they* are.

BISHOPS and Magistrates have both the same Lord, whose Vicegerents they are; and to whom they are both alike accountable. If then you have any other

view than to please him, either in undertaking or discharging the office of a Bishop, though the world may perhaps acquit you of Simony, yet he will punish you as Simoniacal. In like manner if you are a Candidate for any civil Employ, not with a design to do good to the Public, but to fill your own empty Coffers, or to take revenge on those that have displeased you, in the eye of GOD this is downright robbery. For you prosecute Thieves, not to restore what is taken by them to the right owner, but to take it from them to your own use; what difference then is there betwixt them and you? except it be that they rob honest men, and you thieves. In fine, unless as a Magistrate you are resolved to defend truth and justice, not only with the loss of your fortune, but of your life also, Christ will not approve of your administration. And let me add, that no one, in the opinion of *Plato*, is worthy of an office, that shews too great a forwardness and desire to undertake it.—Are you a King? then let not vile flatterers bewitch you with such insinuations as these—that

nothing you could do without it—*that* you

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you are a Sovereign, and therefore above the Laws—that whatever you do, is right and just ; and of course you may do just what you will—that you have nothing to do with the common cant of Priests. But rather, consider what is really the case, that there is one Lord over all, even Jesus Christ, whose Image you ought to bear, as you bear his Scepter. And as you must expect to render unto him a stricter account than others ; so ought you to be more exact in the observance of his Laws. And do not think that your Will is the standard of right ; but rather let right be the measure of your Will. Do not imagine, that what would be a crime in another man, can be virtue in you ; on the contrary, do not even allow yourself in things that might be pardonable in others. For what in them is folly, in you is sin. Let not Authority, Dignity, Applause, and Honour, be the effects of superior wealth ; but the reward of worth above the level of your Countrymen. Let not the vulgar learn from you to admire such things, by reason whereof they are seduced into those very crimes,

which are daily punished by you. For take away the love of Money, and there will be no Thieves and Robbers of any kind—take away the love of Pleasure, and there will be no Ravishers or Adulterers. When therefore you would seem great in the eyes of your subjects, do not display your riches to dazzle the fools; when you would shew them your happiness, set not your luxury and riots before them. Be you the first to teach them, to despise these things by your own example; to admire Virtue, to esteem Frugality, to love Temperance, and to honour Modesty. Do not be guilty of those vices yourself, which by *your* Authority the people suffer for. You may then with a good grace punish wickedness and vice, when that which is the cause of them, Riches and Pleasures, are manifestly condemned by you. Despise not even the lowest of the people, remembering that one ransom redeemed you both. The Grandeur of a Throne, the Haughtiness of Power, and the Pomp of Guards, will not so effectually rescue you from contempt, as a virtuous Life, a decency of Behaviour,
and

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and uncorruptness of Manners, the very reverse of the common peoples. A Prince, though in the discharge of his duty, he holds the chief place, ought to consider in Charity, that there is no distinction of places. True Sovereignty is, not to be the first in possessions, but in greatness of mind and doing most good. Do not convert to your own use, what of right belongs to the Public; but on the contrary, give your very self, and all that belongs to you, for the public use and benefit. The People owe much to you, but you owe all to the People. Your Highness, your Grace, your Majesty, and the like ambitious Titles, though you are forced sometimes to hear, yet be far from acknowledging any claim to, but ascribe them all to Christ, to whom only they are due. He *truly* affronts Majesty, who acts illegally, arbitrarily, and violently, in the name of his Prince. Be most unconcerned and indifferent, where an injury concerns no one beside yourself; remembering always that you are a public Character, and should have no consideration but for the

Public. If you are wise, think with yourself, not how high you are, but how great a weight you alone sustain. — And as your danger is, so be your care greater; taking your measures of government, not from your Ancestors, much less your Flatterers, but from Christ himself. For would it not be absurd for a Christian Prince to take pattern by *Hannibal*, *Alexander* the Great, *Cæsar* or *Pompey*? especially should he imitate their defects, without being able to emulate their virtues. All that the Historians applaud in *Cæsar*, ought not presently to be the object of your imitation; except it squares likewise with the doctrine of our Saviour, or serves however to kindle a zeal for virtue. Let not your whole Kingdom be of weight enough to tempt you to do wrong knowingly; for you had better far lose that, than Christ. Fear not, he will reward you for your lost Dominion, with that which is beyond all Dominion and Power. Nothing, in a word, can be more becoming, magnificent, and glorious in Kings, than to approach as near as possible to the likeness of him, who is King
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of Kings, and whose Goodness as well as
Power is infinite.

BUT Jesus while on earth concealed his
almighty Power, and rather chose to dis-
play his infinite Goodness, as the fittest ob-
ject of our imitation. He therefore de-
clared *that his kingdom was not of this world*,
although he is Lord both of heaven and
earth. Now the rulers of the *Gentiles* ex-
ercise lordship over them, but a Christian
King rules over his people, not with a
rod of Power, but a globe of Charity: and
he that is greatest, should think himself
the Servant, not the Lord of all. Which
makes me wonder that the Popes and Bi-
shops of the Church should take upon them
the swelling titles of power and dominion;
or that Divines are not ashamed vainly and
ignorantly to be saluted Masters by the
common sort; when Christ has forbid his
followers to suffer themselves to be called
Lords or Masters, seeing they have but
one Lord and Master, even Jesus Christ,
who is head over all. Apostle, Bishop,
and Pastor, are terms importing duty, not
dominion; Pope and Abbot likewise are
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the names of dear relations, not of Sovereignty.

But why do I launch out into the boundless ocean of vulgar errors? Which way soever the truly spiritual man turns himself, he will find abundant matter for laughter, more abundant for weeping; he cannot but observe the most depraved and unchristian notions every where prevailing, many whereof have sprung from our allaying and blending Christianity and the world together. Hence the rude and ignorant have taken occasion to misapply what the antient Doctors have spoken of the world, to all but Monks. Whereas *the world*, in the Gospel sense, with the Apostles, with *Augustin*, *Ambrose*, and *Jerom*, means Unbelievers, Apostates, Enemies of the cross of Christ, and Blasphemers of God. These are they that are *careful for the morrow*, because they believe not in Christ's promise; who contend for wealth, power, and pleasures, soasmuch as they are blinded with the glare of visible things, and mistake false blessings for true. This is that *world*, which knew not Christ its *true light*. This is the same that wholly lieth

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lieth in wickedness, that loveth, designeth, and liveth for itself; and that hath not put on Christ, who is all love and goodness. From it Christ selected, not only his Apostles, but all others whom he thought worthy of him. How then do we confound Christianity with the world, which is every where condemned in Scripture; and by an abuse of the word, buoy ourselves up in vice and folly? This evil too is increased by many of the Teachers, who, as *St Paul* says, *corrupt the word of God*, and adapt it to the taste of the present times; whereas they ought rather to square mens morals by that unerring rule. For there is no kind of flattery more pernicious, than that of soothing, instead of healing vice, by the words of the Prophets and Evangelists. A King, for instance, reads, *All power is of God*; and immediately plumes himself upon it. But why does the Scripture make you more proud, and not more careful? namely, because you observe, that *GOD* hath given you a kingdom to rule, but take no notice, that he requires a strict account of your rule and government. A
covetous

covetous man understands that Christians are forbidden to have *two coats*; and the Divine tells him, that by another coat is meant, all beyond the necessities of nature, and that tends to increase mens avarice. "—Very well," replies an old Hunk, "thank God, I am in want of many things."

A SENSUAL and uncharitable man knows, that there are degrees in charity, and that the first place is due to one's own money, life, and reputation, when they come in competition with those of others. Hence he takes occasion to declare, that he will not give unto another, for fear he should want himself; neither will he defend another's character, for fear he should risque his own. He will desert a friend in danger, so that he can escape himself; in short, he will live for himself only, and suffer not the least inconvenience for the sake of any one else.

IT is a great abuse of the examples of holy men, when we imitate them only in the bad part of their characters. Thus Adulterers and Murderers quote *David* on their

their side; and the Miser talks of the riches of *Abraham*: Princes, whose delight is to debauch as many women as they can, talk of the numerous Queens and Concubines of King *Solomon*: *Noah's* intoxication serves as a plea for those, *whose god is their belly*: And the Incestuous screen themselves under the wickedness of *Lot*. But why do we turn away our eyes from Christ to behold them? I am not afraid to say, that even the Prophets and Apostles are no farther to be followed by Christians, than they lead in the way and doctrine of Christ. But if you *will* take pattern by such holy sinners,—with all my heart, provided you go through with it. Thus, if you have been an Adulterer with *David*, be also as great a Penitent.—Have you, like *Magdalen*, been a notorious sinner? Like her *love much, weep much, and fall down at Jesus feet*.—Are you a Persecutor of the Church with *Paul*, or have forsworn yourself with *Peter*? Be ready, as they both were, to *lay down your life for the truth's sake*. GOD, I believe, in mercy, has suffered great men to fall, that we might not despair, being
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in the same condition; if, as we are partakers of their crimes, we partake also in their repentance and amendment. But instead of that, we imitate their faults, and neglect their manifold virtues; like Spiders that suck only poison, or, however, change the nature of the most wholesome juices.—

What are *Abraham's* riches to you, who even *idolize* money? Because he, by the increase of his flock, and the blessing of God, grew rich under a carnal dispensation; therefore you, who are a Christian, think yourself at liberty to raise an immense estate, no matter how 'tis got, in order to spend it riotously, or, what is worse, to hoard it under ground. He, though his store increased, it is plain, did not *set his heart upon it*, as appears by his readiness to sacrifice his only son at the command of God: For he that set so lightly by his son, how little would he have minded his flocks and herds? But you, who dream of nought else but filthy lucre, and admire nothing so much as your money, and are ready for the least hope of gain, to cheat your brother, or renounce your Saviour; do you pretend

Rule VI. *Christ the Christian's pattern.* 107

pretend to be at all like *Abraham*? Thus again, *Lot's* innocent daughters, beholding the country all around them in a conflagration, and taking what they behold for the whole world, and themselves the only surviving persons in it; to prevent the utter extirpation of mankind, did with a pious, not a lewd intention, steal their father's embraces; then too, when the divine command of *Encrease and multiply* was in its fullest force and vigour; and will you have the assurance to compare your unnatural lusts with this their action? In my mind, even their incest was more tolerable than your marriage; provided you marry not to propagate your race, but to pamper your flesh. *David* likewise, after giving so many instances of piety, was once guilty of Adultery; nor did he meet the temptation, but it was laid in his way: And does this presently give you a license to lie with other mens wives, as often as you have a mind, and to hope to come off with impunity? *Peter* was once moved by the fear of death to deny his Master, whom he afterwards died for: and are you therefore at liberty to swear

swear falsely upon any or no occasion? *Paul* too, had no bad intention, but fell thro' ignorance, and repented upon the first admonition; but you, knowingly and wilfully, persist in evil habits, and yet comfort yourself with the example of *St. Paul*.——*Matthew*, by a *word's speaking* only, without any delay, laid aside the thriving business of a Collector; whereas you are so addicted to money, that all the Saints examples, the continual reading of the Gospels, and hearing of so many Sermons, cannot in the least divert you from your purpose. I am told sometimes by Bishops, that *St. Augustin* is said to have kept two mistresses: What if it were so? He was then a Heathen, but we are Christians; he was young, and we are old. What a strange comparison is this, because *Augustin*, a young Heathen, being unwilling to draw in the yoke of matrimony, kept a mistress instead of a wife, to whom however he was as true, as if she had been his wife; therefore it is not so scandalous, I warrant you, in us Christians, though old men, Priests, and Bishops, to abandon ourselves to all manner

manner of debauchery? There is an end at once of all goodness, when we come to cloath our very vices in the dress of virtue, and are quicker in defending our faults, than diligent in amending them; especially when we have learnt the knack of justifying and supporting our wicked opinions by false applications and misconstructions of Scripture. Wherefore, my dearest brethren, rejecting the customs and sentiments of the vulgar, cleave wholly and stedfastly to the Christian discipline, having an equal contempt for the pains or pleasures of sense, for Religion's sake; and let Christ be your only comfort, who will teach you to think rightly, and to live happily. The world indeed accounts this to be mere folly and distraction; yet by this means it has pleased God to save true believers. Happy that fool, who is wise unto Christ; and miserable folly it is, not to know him.

BUT observe, by the bye, that though we ought to differ as much as possible in our sentiments from the vulgar, yet we should have a care how we grow so cynical, as to carp at other mens opinions and ac-
 T tions,

tions, as superciliously to condemn, or bitterly inveigh against them, or to upbraid and vilify our neighbour's manner of life; by which means, we may draw upon ourselves two great inconveniencies; the one is, that of being universally hated; the other, that being so, we should tie up our hands from being able to do good. We be, on the contrary, *all things to all men*, as far as we may with a safe conscience, that we may gain the more unto Christ. Be outwardly gracious unto all, but let your inward purpose nevertheless remain fixed and immoveable. Be without, all goodness, gentleness, kindness, affability, that by these means you may win upon your brother, who ought to be allured to Christ by good usage, and not frightned away by bad. In fine, your opinions should appear, not in big swelling words, but in deeds. Neither may we again be so indulgent to the weakness of the generality, as to be afraid to assert the truth upon a proper occasion: For good nature must be used to reform, but not to deceive men.

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R U L E VII.

Of slender Improvements in Virtue.

BUT if our minds are so weak and puerile, that we cannot attain to such spiritual perfection, we are nevertheless to use our utmost endeavours to come as near as possible to it. Though indeed the best and most compendious way to happiness, is to possess our whole minds at once with the admiration of the things in heaven; that as the shadow follows the body, so the love of Christ, of virtue, and eternity, may naturally produce in us a contempt of what is transient, and a hatred of what is sinful. For these are consequences one of another, and there is a mutual proportion in their increase or decrease. As much as you love Christ, by so much you will hate the world; and the more you regard things invisible, so much the more will visible and fleeting objects be disregarded by you.

We ought therefore, in the improvement of virtue, like that of letters, as *Fabius* says, aspire to the highest perfection; which, if by our own faults we cannot arrive at, the next step is, to abstain in common prudence from the greatest crimes, and to make ourselves as worthy as we can of the mercy of God. For as a body dry and exhausted, but free from noxious humours, is of the two the most healthy; so a mind that is not polluted with any gross sins, tho' at present it be destitute of true goodness, is, nevertheless, more capable of the gift of God. If we are so slow as to be distanced by the Apostles, the Martyrs, and the holy Virgins, let us however not suffer Heathens to outrun us in this race. The greatest part of whom, though they knew not God to worship, nor believed a Hell to be afraid of, yet thought that wickedness was of itself to be avoided at any rate by man; inso-much as many of them chose rather to part with money, life, and reputation, than to depart from virtue. If sin then be of so base a nature, as that it ought not to be committed, notwithstanding any temptations,

tions, either of reward or punishment, to the contrary; yet if a Christian is not to be deterred by God's justice, nor wrought upon by his mercy; if neither the hope of immortality, nor the fear of eternal misery can move him; if too, the natural deformity of vice, by which the *Gentiles* minds were influenced, cannot shame him; at least, let the numerous inconveniencies which attend the sinner, even in this life, have some effect upon him; of this sort are Infamy, loss of Fortune, Poverty, the Contempt and Hatred of good men, Anxiety of Mind, Vexation, and the bitter Pangs of a bad Conscience; which, though some few at present perceive not, being blinded by the rashness of youth, or intoxicated by the pleasures of sin, yet they shall be sensible of them hereafter, and so much the more violently, by how much the later they are seized with remorse. Wherefore young men should be expressly taught, that *such* is the nature and effects of sin, which they had better believe upon so good authority, than learn it by their own experience; lest their lives be corrupted with foul crimes,

crimes, before they know what life is. If then you have no regard for Christ, after he has expressed so much for you; at least, for your own sake, *abstain from evil*. And though it be extremely dangerous to continue long in such a doubtful middle state as it were; yet for those who cannot attain to the aforesaid heroic perfection, it is far better to be only politically virtuous, than to run headlong into all manner of vice and wickedness. This is not indeed the very goal of happiness, but only a step towards it: And, in the mean time, let us pray God to further our weak endeavours.



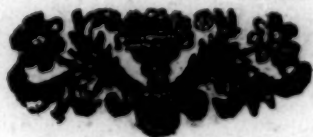
R U L E VIII.

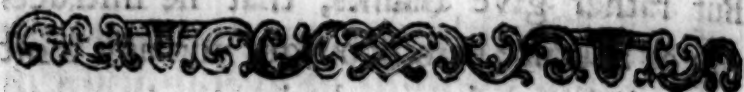
Against being discouraged by Temptations.

IF you are more frequently or violently beset with temptations, do not disturb yourself on that account, as though God neither loved nor regarded you, or as if you were less pious, or less perfect therefore.

But

But rather give thanks, that he instructs you as a future heir, scourges you as a most dearly beloved son, and tries you as a purposed friend. The greatest argument of a man's being unworthy of the favour of God, is being free from temptations. Remember St Paul, who, though he was taken up into the *third heaven*, and there *heard ineffable mysteries*, was, nevertheless, *buffeted by a minister of Satan*. Remember Job, the friend of God; call to mind Jerom, Benedict, Francis, and innumerable other holy Fathers, who were tempted to the greatest sins. If you suffer no more than what so many; and so great men have done before you, what need you despair? Rather try with them to obtain a victory. God will not forsake you, *but will, with the temptation, also make a way to escape*, that you may be able to stand.





R U L E IX.

Of resisting the first motions to Sin.

AS prudent Generals are never off their guard, even though no action is near at hand; so be you forewarned and forearmed against every future attack of the enemy; for he is ever *walking to and fro, seeking whom he may devour*. By this means, you will be able to make a stout resistance, to repel any sudden assault, and presently to *bruise the head* of the venomous serpent; for that is the best and easiest time to subdue him. In fine, it is most for your interest, immediately to dash the young Imps of *Babylon* against the rock of Christ, before they grow up, and are too mighty for you to cope with.



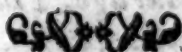
R U L E



R U L E X.

Various ways of overcoming Temptations.

NOW the chief means of resisting the Tempter are these, either to conceive an implacable hatred against him, and at once to defy all his suggestions; or to pray fervently; or to apply diligently to some good employ; or to answer him, as we before observed, out of holy Scripture. In this case, it will be no small benefit to select certain passages out of holy Writ, and to have them ready on every occasion; especially such parts thereof, as you have at any time found your mind much affected with,



U R L E



R U L E X I.

Against Presumption and Despair.

THERE are two dangerous extremes into which good men are liable to run; the one is, that they, being under temptation, frequently give themselves up to Despair; the other, that they are likewise too much elevated with spiritual joy and comfort upon a victory. Therefore, to secure you not only from *terrors by night*, but from the Dæmon that stalketh *at noon day*, see that when you are tempted to any evil, you do not consider so much your own weakness, but reflect that you *can do all things, through Christ strengthening you*; who said not to the Apostles only, but unto you, and unto all, even the lowest of his members, *Be of good courage, I have overcome the world*. Again, after having overcome the Tempter, or being engaged in any good work,

Rule XI. *Of Presumption and Despair.* 219

work, when you find your mind inwardly elated with joy, then be especially careful, that you do not attribute it to your own merit, but entirely to the free grace of God. Apply to yourself likewise those words of St Paul, *What hast thou, that thou didst not receive; now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou boast as if thou hadst not received it?* These evils admit of a twofold remedy; in the one case, you are not to rely on your own strength in any danger, but to have recourse to Christ your head, and from his assistance only to expect the victory; in the other case of spiritual triumph, you are immediately to return God thanks for his goodness, and humbly to acknowledge your own unworthiness.



R U L E XII.

Of the Improvement that may be made of Temptations.

IN your conflict with the enemy, it is not enough to avoid or ward a blow,

you ought to wrench the weapon out of his hand, and, in return, kill him with his own sword. Now this may be done, not only by not yielding to a temptation, but by taking a handle from thence to exercise some act of virtue. And as the Poets elegantly feign, that *Hercules*, from the dangers he was exposed to by the wrath of *Juno*, grew more bold and couragious; so do you, in like manner, become better, not worse for the temptations of the Devil. For instance, — Are you incited to Lust? Confess your frailty, abate somewhat of even innocent delights, and apply more vigorously to pure and spiritual exercises. — Are you inclined to Covetousness? Encrease your alms. — Are you lifted up by Vainglory? Be so much the more humble always. By this means, every temptation will be the renewal of your holy purpose, and an improvement in virtue. This now is the very best and surest method of getting the better of your ghostly enemy; for he will not dare to renew the attack, lest he should be the occasion of your growing better, instead of worse, as he intended.

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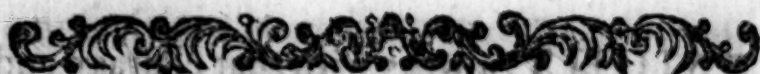


R U L E XIII.

That we ought always to be upon our Guard.

FIGHT always with that courage and resolution, as if this would be the last trial, provided you come off conqueror. For it may so happen, that the divine goodness may bestow this reward on your valour, that having once shamefully discomfited the enemy, he may never assault you again; which has been the case we read of many devout men. And *Origen* is of opinion, that Christians, by defeating the foe, weaken his strength; and that being once bravely repulsed, he is not suffered to tempt a man again. Therefore, in the midst of battel, look for a lasting peace; and again, when you have overcome, be ready to enter the lists a second time. For one temptation after another must be expected, and we must never lay down our arms, never desert our post,

never cease watching, so long as we keep garrison in this citadel the body. Every one ought constantly to observe the Prophet's resolution, and with him be upon his guard.



R U L E XIV.

Against excusing our own, and condemning others Faults.

WE must be very cautious how we regard any sin as a *little* one: For no enemy has oftener got the victory, than one who has been contemned. In this instance I find mankind very much deceived; and here lies their mistake, that they heartily condemn every other fault, but one or two, that they are guilty of themselves, and which, according to their various inclinations, they think *venial*. The greatest part of those that the world calls honest and good men, have a thorough detestation for Theft, Rapine, Murder, Adultery, and

Rule XIV. *Against excusing our Faults.* 223

and Incest; but as for simple Fornication, and the moderate use of Pleasure, that they have no objection to, and think it a small fault. Another is very exact in all other parts of his duty, but he is Luxurious, and Intemperate in Drinking. Some are licentious Talkers, others are Vain and arrogant. What vice at length shall we not be addicted to, if every one palliates his own in this manner? It is an argument that men are not really possessed of the remaining virtues, when they can take delight in any *one* vice; but only put on some appearances thereof, such as Nature, Education, and Custom had stamped on the minds of the very *Gentiles*. But he who hates vice, like a Christian, must needs hate all alike. The man inspired by Charity, pushes on his conquest over the whole army of lusts, and does not indulge himself in *venial* sins, for fear of falling by degrees, from the least to the greatest, and whilst he is careless in trifles, should err in matters of the utmost consequence. Now though we cannot at once root out the whole growth of vices, yet every day we should be di-

minishing them, and improving our virtues; by which means we shall be continually enlarging or taking from that *great heap*, of which *Hesiod* speaks.



R U L E X V.

Of the comparative pain and pleasure of resisting or yielding to a temptation.

IF you are afraid of the difficulty that must be endured in getting the better of temptations, apply this remedy: Do not compare the trouble of resisting, with the pleasure of committing sin; but the present pain of overcoming, with the future pain of sinning, which follows upon being overcome; and also, the present sweet of the crime which bribes you to it, with the future sweetness of a victory, and that ensuing peace of mind, which attends a good soldier of Jesus; and you will see immediately, that there can be no comparison between

Rule XV. *Of resisting Temptations.* 225

tween them. But unwise men are deceived in this; they compare the irksomeness of the trial, with the pleasure of sin; without regarding what will be the *consequence* of either. Now he that yields, will hereafter have much greater and more lasting vexation, than him that resists a temptation:— And again, the victor in the issue will find more sincere and durable pleasures, than those which the captive of sin was at first ensnared with; which any man may experience, that will make trial of both. But he must be a slothful Christian indeed, that daily gives way to a temptation, yet will never be at the pains to try, what it is to get the better of one; which, the oftener he does, the more joyful will be his triumph.



R U L E X V I.

Against Despair.

BUT if you should happen at any time to receive a mortal wound, take care that

that you do not immediately lay down your arms, and surrender at once to the enemy. This I have observed in many men of weak and effeminate minds, that being once down, they never think of rising again to fight, but give the reins wholly to their passions, and never dream of recovering their lost liberty. This is a very dangerous species of Cowardice, which belongs sometimes to persons of not the worst dispositions, but often leads them into the very worst of crimes, Despair; against which, it is the design of this Rule to arm your minds; and to persuade you, when you have fallen into sin, not only not to despair, but to be like valiant soldiers, who, so far from being put to flight, are pricked on by the fear of shame, and the smart of a wound, to renew the fight with more warmth and spirit. In like manner should we, having received a deadly blow, immediately take fresh courage, and atone for our shameful defeat, by an extraordinary zeal for virtue. For it will be much easier for us to cure one wound, than many; a fresh one, than a foul and inveterate one.

one. Rouse yourself likewise with that common verse which *Demosthenes* is said to have made use of,

“ He that fights and runs away,

“ May live to fight another day.”

REMEMBER what notorious crimes the Prophet *David*, King *Solomon*, *Peter* the head of the Church, the Apostle *Paul*, those great patterns of holiness, fell into; whom God perhaps permitted to err, that you likewise, being in the same circumstances, might not despair. Stand up therefore upon your feet without delay, be of good courage, and return to the battel with more zeal and caution. It sometimes happens that good men are the better for having been guilty of capital offences; for to whom much is forgiven, they will love much.





R U L E XVII.

The Benefits of the Cross of Christ.

DIFFERENT ways and means may be prescribed to withstand the various assaults of the Tempter; but for a general Rule against every temptation, whether of Sin or Adversity, the most effectual, and indeed the only one is the *Cross of Christ*; which alone is a guide to the erroneous, a comfort to the afflicted, a defence to the warrior, and a shield sufficient of itself to receive *all the fiery darts of that wicked one*. But it is necessary to be very conversant therein, though not after the vulgar manner; for some there are, who read over every day the history of our Lord's passion, or adore an image of the Cross, or fortify themselves all over with ten thousand signs of it, or keep in their houses a sacred relick thereof, or at certain hours of the day contemplate the sufferings of Christ, and

Rule XVII. *The Benefit of the Cross.* 229

and lament and compassionate them with the same natural emotion, as they would if the like had befallen any other good man that suffered wrongfully. This is not the genuine produce of that tree, but the food of infant souls: But do you, brethren, aspire to the top, and gather its fairest fruits; the principal whereof are these following, namely, that we his members take care to be like our head, by mortifying our affections, that is, our members upon earth; which ought to be so far from disagreeable, that it should be a most joyful and desirable thing, if the spirit of Christ be in us. For can a man be said truly to love him, whom he desires to be as *unlike* as possible? But in order to reap greater benefit from the mystery of the Cross, one should acquire and be well versed in an holy art, of parrying, as it were, with his natural inclinations, that he may be ready prepared whenever there is occasion. The nature of it is, to apply the corresponding part of the Cross, to the particular affections that you would mortify; for there is no kind of adversity or temptation, but may find its proper cure
and

and relief thereby. For instance, when you are delighted with the applause of this world, or dejected by its laughter and contempt, reflect, thou weak member, how great is Christ your head, and how low he humbled himself for your sake. Again, Are you of an envious, evil disposition? Remember how beneficently and willingly *he gave himself for us*, and how good he was, even to the worst of men. Do you love your belly? Consider that he had nothing but *vinegar and gall to drink*. Are you tempted to voluptuous delights? Call to mind how your *Head* lived; not only without any pleasure, but in the midst of continual pains, want, and affliction. Are you moved to anger? Think of him, *who, as a Lamb before the shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth*. Does poverty fit heavy upon you, or the love of money ensnare you? Recollect that he, though Lord of all, *for your sake became poor*, so that he *had not where to lay his head*. If in every other temptation you think thus with yourself, it will not be difficult, but even pleasant to mortify your affections; considering, that
by

Rule XVIII. *Of the dignity of Man.* 231

by this means you conform to your master, and as it were recompense him for all his sufferings on your account.



R U L E XVIII.

Of the dignity of Man.

NOW the remedy aforementioned, although it be, of all others, the readiest for those that have advanced somewhat in the way of life; yet it may be of service to the weaker sort, to reflect in the midst of any temptation, how base, how accursed and destructive a thing sin is, and, on the contrary, of what dignity is man. In matters even of no consequence, we are apt to weigh them with ourselves; in this, which is of the last consequence, shall we not, before we bind ourselves over to the Devil by our own consent, bethink ourselves *who* it was that made us, what state and condition we are in, with what a price we were redeemed, and to what happiness we are called;

called: That man is so noble a creature, as to have this wondrous fabric of the world made by God on purpose for him; that he is a *fellow citizen with angels*, a *son of God*, an *heir of immortality*, a *member of Christ*, a *member of the church*; that our bodies are *temples of the Holy Ghost*; and our minds God's images, as well as his altars: On the contrary, sin is the very bane and destruction both of soul and body; for they return to their native beauty by innocence; but vice, by its contagion, fades and disfigures both, even in this world. Sin is the deadly poison of that most venomous Serpent, the wages of the Devil, which is the most cruel and basest kind of slavery. When you have well weighed these, and the like considerations, ask yourself, if you think it adviseable, for the sake of a short moment's imaginary pleasure of sin, to fall from so great a height of grace and glory, into so low a pit of infamy and vileness, as you can never, by your own strength raise yourself out of?

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R U L E XIX.

The difference betwixt serving God and serving the Devil.

IN the next place compare together those two quite contrary masters, GOD and the Devil; one of whom you make your Enemy, and the other your Tyrant, by sinning. By virtue and innocence you are ranked in the number of the friends of GOD, and adopted unto the right and inheritance of Sons: but by sin you are made a servant and child of the Devil. The *first* is the eternal fountain and original of the greatest beauty, the greatest pleasure, and the greatest good, communicating himself unto all; the *latter* is the parent of all evil, all vice, and all misery. Observe the one's kindness, and the other's malice against you. With what goodness *he* made, with what mercy he redeemed, with what bounty he hath enriched you? with what lenity

doth he daily suffer the sinner, with what joy doth he receive the penitent? Contrary to all this, the Devil, how long hath he not envied and ensnared your soul's happiness? into what troubles hath he not brought you already? and indeed what else does he daily endeavour, but to bring all mankind into the same pit of destruction with himself? Having weighed thus both sides of the question, think in this manner with yourself; Shall I then, forgetful of my birth, and of the greatest benefits already conferred upon me, ungratefully revolt from so high, so loving, so good a Father, merely for the sake of a paltry bait of imaginary pleasure, and enslave myself to the vilest and cruellest tyrant by my own choice? Shall I not at least behave to the one, as I would unto a man that had obliged me? And shall I not flee the other, just as I would a man that was going to do me a mischief?



RULE



R U L E XX.

The different rewards of Virtue and Vice.

A GAIN, the rewards proposed are as different, as the two commanders are; for what can be more unlike than eternal Life and Death? than to enjoy endless bliss in the conversation of celestial Beings: and to be tormented for ever with the damned, our hellish companions in misery? He that doubts this, is not a man, much less a Christian; and he that does not think about it, must be worse than mad. But besides, even in this life piety and impiety produce very different kinds of fruits. For from the one flows that secret satisfaction and true joy of heart, that a man who has once tasted of, would not exchange for all the wealth and pleasure in the world. From the other an innumerable train of evils are derived; and which is worst of

all, those racking pains and torments of a bad conscience. This is that hundredfold produce of spiritual joy, which Christ has promised in his Gospel, as a pledge of eternal happiness. These are those wonderful gifts, that the Apostle speaks of in these words; *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, to conceive the things which God hath prepared for them that love him*, even in the present state; when in the mean time the worm of the wicked dieth not, and they suffer their hell even upon earth. This is that flame, in which the rich glutton in the Gospel was tormented. And the punishments of hell, which the Poets talk so much of, are nothing but the perpetual uneasiness of mind that attends upon a habit of vice. Therefore were you to take away the rewards and punishments of another world, virtue is to be pursued for the happiness annexed to it, and vice to be abhorred for its consequent miseries.

R U L E



R U L E XXI.

Of the shortness of Life.

THINK moreover, how fleeting and uneasy the present life is, how sudden and unexpected death surprises us on all hands. And since no one is sure even of a moment's breath, how dangerous is it to continue day after day in that state, wherein if death, as it often happens, finds you, you are undone for ever?



R U L E XXII.

Of the danger of final Impenitence.

BUT of all evils the worst and most horrible is final Impenitence; which will appear, if you consider out of so great a number how few have truly and heartily repented

repented of their sins; especially such as have gone on in a course thereof to the end of their lives. A relapse into former errors is a very easy and dangerous thing; but to recover one's ground, and to climb to the heights we formerly attained to, there lies the difficulty. Take example then by what befel the Goat in *Æsop's* Fables, and before you go down into the well of vice and wickedness, reflect that it is no such easy matter to get out again.



Special Rules against some particular kinds of vice. Rule I. First, against Lust.

Hitherto we have been proposing remedies for vice in general; we come now, in the next place, to lay down some special Rules against particular kinds of vice: To begin with Lust, which is an evil the very first in life that attacks us, and as it is the most importunate, so is it of the greatest extent, and ruins more than any one beside. If then at any time you find

First Special Rule : against Lust. 239

find your mind prompted to Lust, use the following means to overcome it. Consider in the first place how filthy, how vile, and how unbecoming that pleasure must needs be, which levels man, the divine image, not only with the beasts, but with hogs, goats, dogs, yea, and the very meanest of the brute creation ; or rather, which degrades us below brutes : we, who were created for the society of Angels, and designed to be made partakers of the Divinity. Think also how short and imperfect a pleasure it is ; how much more bitter than sweet it yields : and on the contrary, how noble the soul of man is by nature, how holy a thing is his body ; as we have shewed already in the former Rules. What madness therefore is it, for the sake of so trifling, so base a delight, to dishonour both soul and body in so unworthy a manner ; and to profane that temple, which Christ hath consecrated with his own blood ? Consider likewise what a train of evils this flattering disease brings along with it ; above all, you lose that most invaluable treasure, your character ; for no vice
souds

sounds so ill as that of Lust: you spend your fortune; you destroy the health and beauty of your body; you greatly hurt your constitution; you procure innumerable filthy distempers; you blast the flower of your youth; you accelerate old age; you relax the vigour of your mind; blunt the edge of your understanding; and assume as it were the soul of a brute beast: you are called off at once from all honest undertakings; and be your genius never so great and elevated, it is now plunged wholly in the mire, so that you can think of nothing at present but what is base, filthy, and vile; having lost the use of your reason, which is the chief property of man, and by this means render'd your youth infamous and outrageous, your age odious, mean, and wretched. Be wise therefore, and argue thus with yourself in express terms. Did not such an enjoyment turn out very ill once before? did it not occasion me much damage, disgrace, wearisomness, fatigue, and distemper? and shall I again be a fool, and swallow the hook with my eyes open? shall I once more be

guilty

guilty of, what I must afterwards repent of? Press upon yourself likewise the examples of others, that you know to have been unsuccessful and unhappy in their amours. And on the contrary, take pattern by many young men, and tender maids of your acquaintance, to encourage you to continence, and by comparing both your circumstances together, reproach yourself with remissness. Why cannot you do as much as such or such persons, of that sex, of that age, so bred and born, have done and continue still to do? If you will but endeavour, you may do as well. Reflect how honourable, how chearful, and how invigorating a principle, purity of body and mind is; that it also makes us most acceptable to the Angels, and most worthy to receive the holy Ghost. For that blessed Spirit is a lover of Chastity, and abhors no vice more than Lewdness; he is never indeed better pleased, than to reside and dwell in chaste and virgin minds. Set before your eyes the indecorum and madness there is in being in love; in looking pale, in vexing and tormenting yourself,

in weeping, flattering, and becoming an humble suppliant to a vile strumpet. To give nightly serenades, to be at your mistresses beck, to endure the insolent sway of a woman, to expostulate, quarrel, and then be reconciled again; and in short, willingly to suffer yourself to be laughed at, kicked, robbed, and wounded, by a prostitute; what man would endure this? where is your honour? where that generous mind made for the highest purposes? — Consider likewise what train of evils attend upon the commission of this one crime. Other vices bear some affinity to their neighbouring virtues; but Lust, on the contrary, has not the least connection with any virtue, but is closely coupled with many other great and enormous vices. Suppose then it were no great harm to commit fornication, yet it is very bad to disobey one's parents, to disregard one's friends, to waste our own estate, and to rob another's; to be guilty of perjury, drunkenness, theft, to quarrel, to commit murder, and to blaspheme; all these, and greater crimes, you are likely to fall into, when

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when you are governed by pleasure, are no longer your own master, but have unhappily abandoned yourself to her direction. Observe carefully too, that *this life flecth like smoke, and passeth away as a shadow*; that death layeth numberless snares for us, lying in wait at all times and in all places. And here it will be of some use to call to mind those of your acquaintance, friends, cotemporaries, or juniors, but especially the companions of your wanton deeds, that have died suddenly; and take warning by their examples. Think how they lived in pleasure, but died in misery; that they grew wise when perhaps it was too late, and untimely repented of their accursed joys. Remember the severity of the last day's Judgement, and the dreadful thunder of that terrible sentence, that dooms the wicked to everlasting fire; and be assured, that your short-lived pleasures will bring on endless torments. Weigh well what an exchange you are about to make, when you yeild up for the sake of a mean transient satisfaction, a much higher, even in this life; and forego future everlast-

ing bliss, as well as incur never-ceasing misery, for a mere shadow of delight.

BUT if however you think it too much to give up so paltry a pleasure, for Christ's sake; remember, I pray, what pains he endured for you: for besides the common calamities of life, how did he pour out his sacred blood, and what an ignominious and bitter death did he die for your sake? and will you then, unmindful of all his benefits, crucify the Son of GOD afresh, by repeating those sinful pleasures, which cost your Lord such pains to atone? In the next place recollect with yourself, agreeably to a former Rule, what kindness he has heaped upon you, without any merit of yours; in return for which (though indeed no return can be equivalent) he expects nothing more than, after his example, that you would abstain from hurtful Pleasures, and fix your affections upon perfect Beauty and sovereign Good. Compare together the different *Venus* and *Cupid* of *Plato*, that is to say, an honourable and a base Love, a virtuous and a vicious Desire; compare, I say, their different natures,

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tures, objects, and rewards. And when you are prompted to Lewdness, as well as in every other temptation, set before your eyes your guardian Angel, the constant witness of all your thoughts and actions; and remember that you are in GOD's presence, before whose eyes all things are naked and open; who sitteth upon the heavens, and beholdeth the deep abyss. And will you dare to commit a thing so base, that you would be ashamed of before men, in the sight of the Angel that attends you, GOD himself and the heavenly Host looking on and abhorring you? Tho' one had the eyes of a *Lynx* or an *Eagle*, they would not enable him to see more clearly in the fairest light, what another man is doing, than GOD and the Angels plainly behold what is brooding in the secret folds and lurking places of your heart. Consider with yourself likewise, that when you indulge your Lust, one of these two things must be the consequence; either the taste of pleasure will so enchant and inebriate your mind, that you will proceed from one act of sin to another, till you be-

come blind and reprobate, and being grown callous in vice, will not be able to forsake your sinful enjoyments, even when they have forsaken you. For this is a common case with men, who in spite of a decayed body, a fallow complexion, frozen blood, wasted strength, and eyes very near blind, have still an incessant itch upon them; and are now more to be blamed for their obscene discourse, than for their former lewd actions: and what can be more execrable and unnatural than this?—The other alternative is, that if by the extraordinary grace of God you should happen to repent, you must then atone for that momentary joy by great grief of mind, many tears, and much pains. How much better therefore would it be, never to taste of the poisonous cup of pleasure; than either to fall into such a reprobate state, or to pay thus dearly for so false, so trivial an enjoyment?

Your person and character will likewise afford you many arguments to dissuade you from fulfilling your desires. Are you a Priest, remember that you were consecrated wholly for divine offices; and how
vile

vile a thing would it be to receive the sacred body of Christ into those hands which you defile at the same time with the touch of a common prostitute? to perform that sacred rite, at which Angels do minister, with the same hands that you handle the most odious pollution? How inconsistent is it, to be one body and one spirit with God; at the same time that you become one flesh with a harlot? — Are you a Scholar; so much the more noble and godlike is your soul, and so much the more unworthy therefore of such an affront. Are you a Prince or a Nobleman; so much is the offence greater, by how much higher your station is. Are you married; think how *honourable the bed undefiled* is, and let your marriage resemble as much as possible the holy nuptials of Christ and his Church, whereof it is an image; so that it may be equally fruitful and equally chaste, for in every condition of life it is base in a man to be a slave to his Lust. Let him that is young be careful how he withers the flower of life, which never blossoms any more. Let him not waste in riot those precious golden

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years, which flee away most swiftly, but never return again. Be not led away by the rashness and inexperience of youth, to commit a crime, that may gall you all your life after with the remembrance of guilt, and those sharp stings of remorse, which Pleasure leaves behind her at her departure. If you are a woman, what can become you better than chastity? if a man, you are made for higher purposes, and should despise those levities; if you are old, make use of other mens eyes, that you may see how unbecoming Pleasure is in you; which is deplorable enough, and ought to be curbed in young men, but in old people is monstrous, and ridiculous even in the eyes of the most effeminate. Of all prodigies, the greatest and most prodigious is Lewdness in old age. O foolish and forgetful dotard, behold thyself in a glass, and confess thy snowy locks, thy furrowed brow, and cadaverous face; and seeing thyself already have one foot in the grave, employ thy mind on thoughts more suitable to thy condition. Tho' thy reason prevail not, yet let thy years at least

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admonish, or rather compel you to do so. Pleasure herself rejects you ; saying, You and I are no ways fit for each other ;

Luxisti satis, edisti satis, atque bibisti ;

Tempus abire tibi.——

“ Learn to live well, or fairly make your will ;

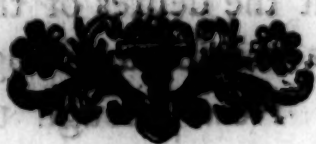
“ You’ve play’d, and lov’d, and eat, and drank
your fill.

Why do you still pursue the pleasures of life, when life itself has very near left you? It is high time to take into your bosom a spiritual *Abishag* for your concubine, that by her holy heat she may cherish your mind, and warm your frozen limbs by her youthful embraces.

*A recapitulation of the Remedies proposed for
the cure of Lust.*

TO sum up all ; the principal means to guard against the desires of the flesh, are these ; first a careful avoiding of all opportunities. Now though this precept holds good as well in every other vice, forasmuch as whosoever willingly rushes into danger, deserves to perish therein ; yet this
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is a particular kind of Syren, which there is no other way of conquering, but by flight. In the next place, I would recommend moderation in eating and sleeping, as well as abstinence sometimes from other lawful pleasures; the consideration of your own death, and the contemplation of the death of Christ. It will be of some use to converse with none but chaste and virtuous people; and to avoid the company of soft effeminate persons, as you would the plague. Flee solitude with idleness, and diligently apply your mind to the meditation of heavenly things, or any other virtuous studies. But above all, dedicate yourself wholly to the reading of God's word; and pray frequently and fervently, more especially when you are under temptation.



RULE



R U L E II.

Against Avarice.

IF you are by nature prone to Avarice, or prompted to that vice by the instigation of the Devil; remember what was inculcated by the former Rules, concerning the dignity of your estate, that wast created and redeemed for no other purpose, but that you might everlastingly enjoy the soveraign good; and that for thy sake God created the world and all things therein. How mean and narrow therefore is it, not to use, but instead of that to dote upon such paltry inanimate things? Were it not for mens universal error, what is Gold and Silver, but white and yellow earth? If almost all the heathen Philosophers despised money, shall you that are a disciple of Christ, who was poor himself, and who are called to a much better inheritance, admire the greatness of wealth; which

which it is truly noble to despise, not to possess? But to this the bulk of nominal Christians, that most cunningly impose upon themselves, object, that the necessity of the thing obliges them to get riches, without which there is no living at all, nor can you live conveniently with a little, but great riches will purchase every accommodation of life. They will take care of your health, provide for your children, assist your friends, prevent contempt, and even increase your reputation. You will scarce find one Christian in a thousand that does not both say and think as much. But to give an answer to both these objections, first because they pretend necessity as a cloak for their covetousness, I would refer them to the parable of the lillies and birds in the Gospel, who *take no care for the morrow*, but live as we say from hand to mouth. I would put them in mind likewise, that Christ forbid his disciples to provide *either purse or scrip for their journey*. And again, he commands us, *omitting these cares, before all things to seek the kingdom of God*; and promises, that all the
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Second Special Rule: against Avarice. 253

necessaries of life *shall be added unto us*. When did ever any want bread, that devoted themselves wholly to religion? And how little is it, that nature requires? But you measure necessity not by the demands of nature, but by the cravings of appetite. Whereas the pious man will be contented with even less than the supplies of nature. Not that I admire those who have parted with their all, that they may live the more boldly upon others. For there is no harm in possessing riches, but in setting our hearts upon them. If you have abundance, be a good steward thereof: if you chance to lose it, be not sorry as for a great loss, but rather rejoice that you have got rid of so dangerous an encumbrance. Now he that makes it the main purpose of his life to hoard up money, and looks upon it with great admiration and esteem, and moreover lays up against a long life and extreme old age; such a one may be indeed an understanding Tradesman, but he cannot be called a good Christian, forasmuch as he wholly depends upon himself, and has no faith in Christ's promises; whose goodness

is such, as makes him cloath and feed the birds of the field, and will he, think you, forsake a religious man that depends upon him? But let us next examine those conveniencies which riches are said to procure. And first, by consent even of the heathen Philosophers, among the blessings of life, wealth was allowed to hold the last place; and whereas according to *Epiſtetus's* division, every thing else, but virtue alone, is without the man; yet nothing is so much exterior to him as money, nothing brings him so small advantage. For were you alone possessed of all the Gold, and all the Jewels that the whole world contains, would you therefore be one jot better, wiser, or more learned? would your body be in a better state of health? would you become handsomer or younger? But you will say, wealth purchases pleasures; true, but such as are our bane. It confers honour; well, but of what kind? why, that false honour which fools contribute, whom it is a reproach almost to have pleased. To be praised by the praise-worthy is true honour, as it is the highest sort to be acceptable

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ceptable to Christ: and respect is the reward of virtue, not of wealth. The common people give place to, and reverence you, it may be; you simpleton, it is your *cloaths* they admire, and not you. But look into your own breast, and consider the meanness of your soul; which if the vulgar apprehended, they would think you as much to be pitied, as now to be envied. But fortune procures friends; yes, false ones, who are for their own advantage, not yours. And indeed, on that score the Rich are the most unhappy, because they can never know their friends. For one secretly hates him, because he is covetous: another envies him for being rich: a third, from selfish motives, flatters and tickles him, that he may afterwards make a prey of him: and he that loves him most, wishes him under-ground; for no one loves him so well as to chuse that he should live rather than die, as no one is so intimate as to tell him a word of truth. And should the rich man indeed have a sincere friend, yet he cannot but suspect him with the rest: he looks upon them all as vultures,

tures, drawn thither by the scent of the carcass, or as flies buzzing about him for their own advantage. Whatever conveniencies therefore wealth may seem to bestow, they are all vain and imaginary; but it produces many substantial evils, as it takes away many real blessings.

MOREOVER, if we weigh the loss and gain against each other, we shall find, that upon the whole, the advantages it gives are more than counterbalanced by its many disadvantages; for how much pains is necessary to procure it? With what peril and care is it kept? And with what vexation and grief is it lost? For which reason they are called *thorns* by our Saviour, forasmuch as they destroy that peace of mind, which is man's chief blessing, by innumerable cares and fears. Neither is the thirst of money to be appeased, but it provokes the appetite more and more, and drives a man headlong into all manner of wickedness. Do not therefore flatter yourself with a vain notion, that you may be both rich and religious too. Remember what the *Truth* hath said, that *it is easier for a camel*

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to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. And it is very true what St Jerom says, "That a rich man is either the possessor or inheritor of unjust gains." Great wealth is neither to be had nor held without sin. Think likewise what greater possessions it robs you of. For the man that loves money, hates the very nature of virtue and ingenious arts. Besides, among the vices, Avarice only is termed Idolatry by St Paul, and is the most antichristian of all others. For you cannot serve both God and Mammon.

A summary of the precautions against Avarice.

YOU will no longer dote on money, if you carefully weigh real advantages against false ones, and compare imaginary benefits with substantial evils. If you learn to contemplate and love that sovereign good, which alone can fill the mind of man, though every thing else be wanting; for this has too great a capacity to be satisfied with all that the world can give. If you

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frequently

frequently set before your eyes the naked condition in which you came into the world, and that in which you must leave it dying: If your thoughts be continually taken up with the rich fool, unto whom the Scripture said, *This night shall thy soul be required of thee; then whose shall those things be that thou hast gathered?* Lastly, if you turn away your eyes from the depraved manners of the vulgar, and fix them on the poverty of the blessed Virgin, the Apostles, the Martyrs, and especially of Christ your Head, and are seriously afraid of that woe which is denounced against them that be *rich in this world.*



R U L E III.

Against Ambition.

IF ever Ambition should enchant your fancy, presently fortify your mind with these admonitions. Be thoroughly convinced,

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vinced, agreeably to what was laid down in the former Rules, that true honour is the reward of virtue only, which, however, we should sometimes shun, as our Saviour hath taught us both by word and example. And the only honour which a Christian ought to aim at, should be the praise, not of men, but of G o d: For *whom he commendeth, he only*, as the Apostle says, *is approved*. Now the honour which is paid by bad men on a bad account, is not honour, but real disgrace. If it be given for the sake of an indifferent thing, such as Beauty, Wealth, Strength, or Descent, even that is not, properly speaking, honour. For no one deserves honour for that which deserves not praise. If a man is honoured for his good deeds, that is honour truly; but if he be good, he will not covet it, being contented with the applause of his own conscience. See then the folly of those honours, which are so greedily sought after by the multitude. For by whom are they bestowed? but by those that know no difference of right and wrong.—And for what? Generally for something bad; though some-

times indeed, for what is neither good nor bad. — And upon whom? but upon the most unworthy. He then that honours another, does it either out of fear, and is to be feared in his turn; or to get by you, and so laughs at you; or else, admires things that don't deserve his admiration, and is therefore to be pitied; or because he verily thinks you have such qualifications as are worthy of respect. — Now if he is mistaken in you, endeavour then to be such as he esteems you; but if he is right in his opinion, give honour to God who has bestowed on you such honourable talents. You ought no more to attribute praise than virtue to yourself. But besides, is it not downright madness to value yourself upon the opinion of men, who, when they please, can take away this very character they have bestowed upon you; and dishonour you as much as they honoured you before? And indeed, nothing can be more silly, than to delight in the enjoyment of such honours, or to be sorry for the loss of them; since if they were sincere, they never could be given, as they are, to the worst and basest of men;

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may, generally speaking, they are ofteneſt aſcribed to thoſe, who are leaſt deſerving of true honour.

THINK alſo of the happineſs of a private retired life, free from the noiſe of pomp and pageantry, as well as the contrary inconveniencies attending upon greatneſs, which is perplexed with cares, and full of anxiety, peril, and trouble. How difficult is it, not to forget one's ſelf in proſperity? How hard to ſtand in ſlippery places? How fatal a fall is from on high? Honour too is accompanied with the greateſt trouble. Think how ſevere will be the ſentence of the great Judge of all upon thoſe, that have obtruded themſelves into employments of honour before others. For he that hath humbled himſelf ſhall find mercy as to the humble; but he that exalteth himſelf as a conſpicuous perſon, he cutteth off the ſuccours of grace. Let Chriſt's example be ever preſent with you: For who in the eyes of the world could be more mean and deſpicable? Yet how did he reſuſe the honours that were offered unto him, who was in
truth

truth above all honour? What contempt he expressed of them by preferring an Ass to ride on? How did he condemn them, when cloathed in purple, but crowned with thorns? In short, how ignominious was the death he chose? But he whom the world despised, his Father glorified; and let *your* glory, as well as salvation, be in the cross of Christ. For what will signify your being honoured on earth, if you are rejected and despised by G o d and his angels?



R U L E IV.

Against Pride.

K N O W yourself, according to the old Proverb, which is the best preservative against Pride; that is, ascribe unto G o d whatsoever greatness, beauty, or excellence is in you, and do not mistake it for your own perfection. On the contrary, whatsoever meanness, baseness, or depravity

depravity you find in yourself, esteem that as wholly yours. Remember the vileness of your conception and birth; how naked and destitute, brutish and miserable you were, when you first crawled into this world. How many diseases, casualties, and pains, your frail body is liable to. How little a thing will dispatch this proud *Philistine*, that struts and swells with undaunted spirit. Consider what it is you value yourself upon: If it be a thing of an indifferent nature, this is folly; if a wicked thing, 'tis madness; and if a good one, ingratitude. Remember that there is not a more certain proof of a man's folly, nor a more desperate kind thereof, than his being highly pleased with himself. If it delights you to see another submitting himself to you, reflect that there is One greater and more powerful that is over you, even God, who humbleth the lofty, levelleth the hills with the plains, and spared not even an angel that grew proud. It will be of use likewise, though not equally so, to compare yourself always with your betters.—
Are you fond of your Person? Cast your
eyes

eyes on those that are handsomer.—Do you plume yourself on your Learning? Observe others that are far beyond you in knowledge. And recollect, not so much what you have, as what you are deficient in; with *St Paul, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before.* Moreover, it may not be amiss, to make our *defects* a kind of ballast against the strong gale of Pride, and thus to drive out one evil by another. As if we should place before our eyes any bodily deformity, or other disadvantage, whether the stroke of chance, or brought upon us by our own folly, which greatly afflicts and torments us; that so, like the Peacock, being always intent upon the most ugly part of ourselves, we may learn to be humble. Besides, as no other crime is more hateful before God, so, in the eyes of men, nothing is more detested and laughed at than arrogance; whereas modesty, on the contrary, gains both the good will of heaven, and the friendship of men.—To sum up all, there are two particular considerations that will cure this evil; the one

one is, to reflect upon what you are in yourself, namely, corruption in your birth, a bubble throughout life, and food for worms after death; the other is, to call to mind what Christ was made for your sake.



R U L E V.

Against Anger and Revenge.

WHEN your mind is pricked on by a hearty desire of Revenge, then remember that Anger is far enough from being Courage, which it seems to resemble. For nothing is so effeminate, so weak and rash, as the love of Revenge. You would put on the appearance of bravery, by suffering no injury to pass unrevenged; but, in reality, you betray a childish humour, that cannot be governed like a man. How much greater and more generous is it, to despise, rather than imitate another's folly? But you'll say, he has done me an unkindness, he triumphs and insults over me.

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The worse he is, be you so much the more unlike him. For would it not be madness in you, to grow wicked yourself, only to revenge another's wickedness? If you neglected an affront, every one would see that you did not deserve to be so used; but if you are moved thereby, you will by that means make the aggressor's cause the better. Consider likewise, that in this case Revenge, though you have suffered a loss, will not however repair, but rather encrease it. For when will there be an end of mutual reprisals, if each party cannot be satisfied without a retaliation? New enemies will arise on both sides; your sorrow will be aggravated; and the longer it continues, it will be the more difficult to be removed. Whereas, by gentleness and patience, sometimes he that did the injury is reformed, and from being your enemy, may become a fast friend. But, by Revenge, the evil which you would rid yourself of, is often returned upon you with interest.

ANOTHER effectual course to pacify one's Anger, is by consideration of the former distinction;

Fifth Special Rule: against Anger. 265

distinction, which shews that one man cannot really hurt another against his will, except it be in mere outward trifles, which do not so directly concern the man. For God alone can take away the valuable blessings of the mind, which he never does from any but the ungrateful; as he alone can bestow them, which he is not wont to do upon the angry and implacable. A Christian therefore cannot be hurt but by himself; and an injury only reverts on the head of the doer.

It will be of some use also towards subduing your passion, to collect the several circumstances; by an apt representation whereof, an orator would extenuate, and in a manner annihilate the injury put upon you by another: Thus you may say to yourself, It is true, he has incommoded me, but the damage is easily repaired; besides, he is a raw, unexperienced youth, a boy, a mere woman; he did it by the instigation of another, not knowing what he did; or when he was almost intoxicated, and therefore may be pardoned. On the other hand, has he greatly injured you?

still he is your father, brother, tutor, friend, or wife. It is but meet to forgive them this wrong, out of the love or respect that you bear your relations. Or you may *set off* an injury, by weighing it with his former kindnesses, or by comparing it with the offence that you may have given him. He has, you may say, hurt me; but at other times, how often has he done me good? And it were mean to forget a kindness, but to be mindful of a slight provocation. Now indeed he has offended me; but then, how often have I offended him? I will pardon him, that he may afterwards pardon me by *my* example.

BUT it will be a much more immediate cure, if, when any man has affronted you, you reflected how often and how greatly you have sinned against GOD, and on how many accounts you are indebted to him: For so much as you forgive your debtor, GOD is ready to forgive you. This method of paying our debts, is taught us by our great Creditor; and he will never reject that condition which he made himself. Many a one, in order to be absolved, goes

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to Rome, takes a voyage to St James, or buys large indulgencies. Though there were nothing wrong in this, yet certainly the truest way to be reconciled to G O D, is to be reconciled to your brother, when you have ought against him. Forgive your neighbour a small fault (and such are all committed by one man against another) that Christ may forgive your great and innumerable faults. But it is hard, you will say, to bridle one's anger: But did not Christ suffer much greater hardships for you? Was you not an enemy, even when he laid down his precious life for you?— And with what clemency does he not daily endure the constant repetition of your crimes? Lastly, with what meekness did he bear affronts, imprisonment, stripes, and at length, the most ignominious death? Why do you boast him to be your head, if you do not chuse to be of his body?— Now you can never be a member of Christ, unless you follow his example. But, say you, he does not deserve to be forgiven: What then, was not you equally unworthy to be forgiven by G O D? Would you
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find mercy yourself, and at the same time be rigorous and severe to your brother? Is there any thing extraordinary in one sinner's pardoning another, after Christ has vouchsafed to pray unto his Father for his crucifiers? Is there any difficulty in not *revenging* yourself upon a brother, whom you are bound even to love? Is it hard not to return an injury, where you ought to do a kindness, if you would behave towards a fellow servant, as Christ did to his servant? Lastly, though *he* be unworthy to receive *good for evil*, yet it becomes *you* to do it for Christ's sake, who deserves no less at your hands. But by patiently enduring one injury, you reply, I may bring on myself another; and my enemy will repeat the insult, if he does not smart for this.—If without being to blame yourself, you can avoid any such thing, in G O D's name avoid it; or if you can remedy it, do so; or if you can make yourself amends, there is no reason why you should not, yea, if you can save an enemy from his own rage, you cannot do better; but if this is not to be done, it is better to let him per-
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rish by himself, than together with you. And rather think him an object of compassion, than worthy of punishment, who imagines that he has hurt you. Would you be justly angry, be angry with the crime, and not with the man. But the more natural this vice is to you, be so much the more careful to arm yourself beforehand against it, and let this be your invariable constant resolution, never to say or do any thing in a passion. Do not trust yourself, when you are moved. Suspect even your best deeds, that arise from those impetuous fallies. Remember that there is no other difference between an angry man and a lunatic, than between a short and a continued madness. Consider how many things you have said and done in a passion, which you could heartily wish were undone, though in vain. Furthermore, whenever your blood is moved, though you cannot presently get the better of your indignation, be however so far your own master, as to know that you are not right: Even this recollection is a degree of sobriety. Think thus with yourself,

self, I am indeed at present so disposed, but by and by I shall be quite of another mind: Why then should I say that to a friend in anger, which, when I shall be cool, I cannot recal? Why should I do that now in my rage, which, when I am come to myself, I shall be very sorry for? Why shall not reason, religion, and obedience to Christ, have that effect upon me, which time itself will quickly have? No man I believe is so splenetic, but he may command himself thus far at least. It is best however to strengthen one's mind to that degree at length, by reason, instruction, and use, as not to be moved at all; as it will be an instance of great perfection, to fall out with the vice only, and to requite with kindness what was meant for an unkindness. But the highest example of forbearance is, for a man never to yield in the least to his inclinations. Never to be angry, is to be most godlike, and therefore, most amiable. *To overcome evil with good,* is to imitate the perfect goodness of Christ Jesus. *To bridle and restrain anger,* is the part of a wise man; but to indulge our
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gall, is not the property even of a man, but like the wildest and most untractable of brute beasts. If you would know then how much below a man it is to give way to wrath, observe only the *countenance* of one angry, when you are cool yourself; or look into the glass when *you* are moved; at such a time when your eyes glare, your cheeks look pale, your mouth is distorted, your lips foam, your limbs shake, your voice roars, and your gestures are various, who then can esteem you to be a man?

Y O U see, Brethren, how large a field is open to any one, that would discourse in like manner upon the several kinds of vice not yet spoken of. But here I shall put a full period to this Dissertation, leaving the rest to your own prudence and sagacity. For as it was not our design, so indeed it would be an infinite labour, to proceed as we began, and harangue against each individual vice in particular, as well as exhort you to the contrary virtues. All I intended, and all that you ought to expect from me, is to point out to you the art and dis-

cipline requisite in this new species of war; that so you may be able the better to fortify yourself against the prevailing evils of your past life. What therefore I have done in one or two instances, merely for example's sake, that ought you to do, as in general, so, more especially, in those cases where you are most liable to fall, whether it be through natural infirmity, or acquired *habits* of sin. Against these we should establish the firmest resolutions in our minds, and renew them every now and then, lest they grow obsolete and be forgotten; more particularly, if the sins we are tempted to be those of evil-speaking, obscene talking, envy, or gluttony. For these are great enemies of our Christian warriors, whose assaults the mind should be long before prepared and guarded against by prayer, by wise proverbs, by the sacred rules of Scripture, and by the examples of holy men, but more peculiarly by that of Christ himself.

THOUGH I doubted not but that you might be abundantly supplied with all these requisites in the word of God, yet brother-ly

ly love prompted me to assist your pious endeavours and holy purposes, to the utmost of my abilities, by this extempore little *Treat*; which I was the rather induced to, fearing lest you should fall in with that superstitious, rather than religious kind of men, who, partly for filthy lucre, partly out of a flaming zeal, but not that *which is according to knowledge, compass sea and land*; and having found by chance a man that is beginning to repent of his evil course of life, they immediately endeavour, by the most wicked exhortations, threats, and flatteries, to thrust him into a Monastery, as if it was impossible to be a Christian, without wearing the Cowl. Then having perplexed his conscience with innumerable doubts and scruples, they oblige him to observe certain trivial Traditions of human invention, and drive the wretch into a kind of *Judaism*; teaching him, not as a Christian ought, to *love*, but to *fear*. To be a Monk, is not to be religious, but it is a kind of life adapted to the genius and constitution of some, as, on the contrary, it is hurtful and pernicious to others; to or
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from which, I neither persuade nor dissuade you: All that I advise and insist on is, that you do not place Religion in *meat*, or in *drink*, or in *cloaths*, or in any other thing that is visible to sense, but only in that which we have observed already. And in whomsoever you observe the true resemblance of Christ, let him be your guide. But if there are no men to be found, whose conversation may improve and instruct you, then withdraw yourself, as much as possible, from human society, and converse chiefly with the holy Prophets, Apostles, and Christ Jesus; and contract, more especially, an intimacy with *St Paul*; carry him about in your bosom, and lay him not aside by night or by day, but get every word of his by heart.—Now may Jesus, the Author of every good purpose, vouchsafe to assist favourably the very first seeds of Piety in us, and help forward the glorious work of Reformation, that we may soon grow up in him unto perfect men. Brethren, farewell, dear to me at all times, but never more so, than when ye follow after that which is good.

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